# Sounds of revival
# popular resistance through the practice of Chilean cueca

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# *Sounds of Revival.*
## *Popular Resistance through the Practice of Chilean Cueca*

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# ABSTRACT

The *cueca*, national dance of Chile, involves various styles that correspond to different social identities. The official version most commonly receives the name of *cueca huasa*, in association with rural imaginaries that respond to elites' landowning nostalgia. This thesis examines the revival process of the historically unofficial variant of the Chilean cueca—urban-popular cueca—which has been unfolding since the early 1990s, coincidently with the return to democracy. Understanding that the post-dictatorship period in Chile still exhibits considerable remnants of tacit authoritarianism and manifest inequity, my main argument is that during the past three decades the practice of urban-popular cueca has represented a space for popular resistance. Notions of *el pueblo* and the *fiesta popular* are crucial to grasping the cultural specificity of this revival process and this cueca as a site of resistance. Through ethnographic methods, I analyse three dimensions within which I understand such resistance to operate. First, a political one, which entails notions of folklore and national identity, examining how the cueca has moved away from such hegemonic identifications in a process of *de-folklorisation*. Secondly, a social dimension involving the vindication of a *popular* identity that is central to this revival cueca style, and which is grounded on the figure of the *roto* and the practice of *canto a la rueda*. And thirdly, a gender dimension concerning the (re)construction of a contemporary urban *cantora* archetype as an essential part of the process of women's entrance into the male-dominated world of urban-popular cueca. Moreover, reflexive research methods involving my own experience of music learning and social interactions in the field have helped me interrogate my positionality within the cueca scene and its historical processes. Finally, through music analysis, I build a stylistic history of the genre that further illustrates these political, sociocultural and gender dynamics and tensions.

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I was lucky enough to be born into a (very) crowded family where, in the midst of chaos, I obtained one of the most critical learnings in life: to do what I love. I would not have learned this without the unconditional love, encouragement and support of my parents Fernando and Carmen. My seven siblings have also been an incredible example of the diversity of trajectories you can follow in life, as well as very loyal companions in the process of discovering such paths. With many of them, I have shared the love for music and even the practice of it. In particular, I have to mention two of them: Juan Pablo, who has been a mentor in every possible way, with infinite patience and availability to teach me what I don't know; and José, who has been my long-distance partner in learning and enjoying the cueca and Chilean folkloric music in general. Also, Fernando, Andrés, Kuky, Caro, and Toño have been a source of strength and inspiration, especially during these five years that I have been away from home. And speaking of my extended family, I cannot forget to mention the great love and support of Gustavo and Ana María, and that of my dearest friends who are too many to mention here, but you know who you are.

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As will be read through these lines, a considerable part of this thesis has been the insightful contribution of all of the people who participated in this study through interviews, workshops, lessons, informal conversations, and working companionships. To all of them goes my eternal gratitude. I would like to especially thank Chabelita, Mily, Fanny, Laura, Diego, Dángelo, Dani S., Tati, and Caro L., for their wisdom, their openness, their music, and especially their dear, dear friendship. Andrea Martínez was enormously helpful. Felipe Solís has been extremely generous as well, both with his time and his sharp views, and I believe not only I, but the whole Chilean community owes him for the incredible cueca archive he has come to build and make available for all of us.

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*To José, Manu, and Simón, with whom*
*every single effort has become*
*ever more meaningful*
*and enjoyable.*

# NOTE ON TRANSLATION

Unless stated otherwise, all translations from the Spanish language are my own. There are a few concepts that appear to be untranslatable into English, in which case the original Spanish terms are maintained and italicised. Such terms are duly described in a glossary that constitutes the final section of this document.

# LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

*Figure 0.1. Map of Chile*

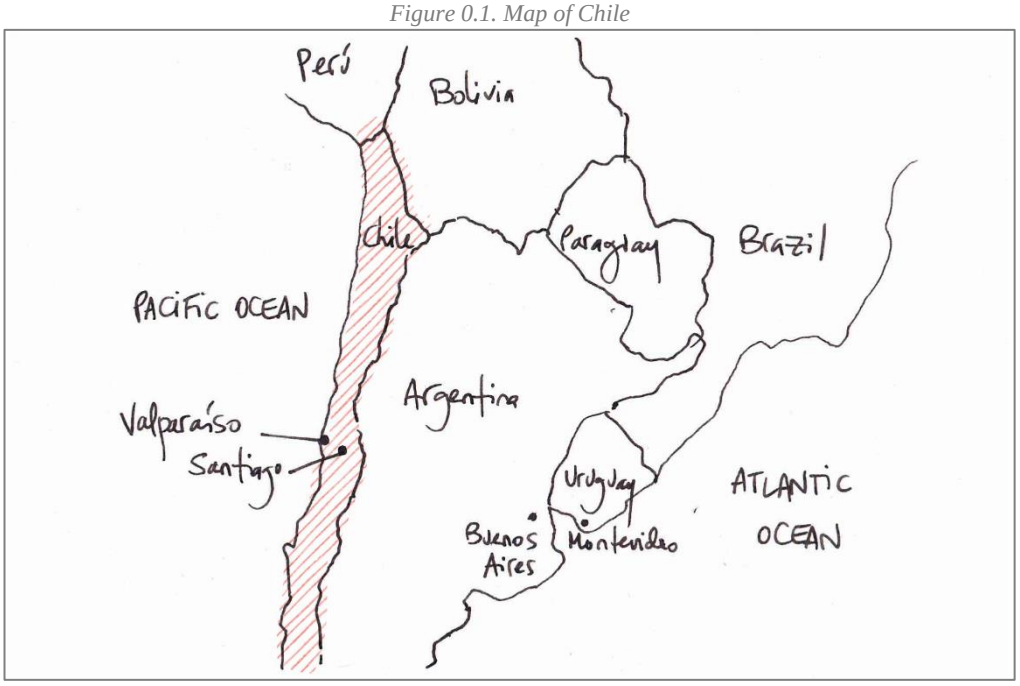
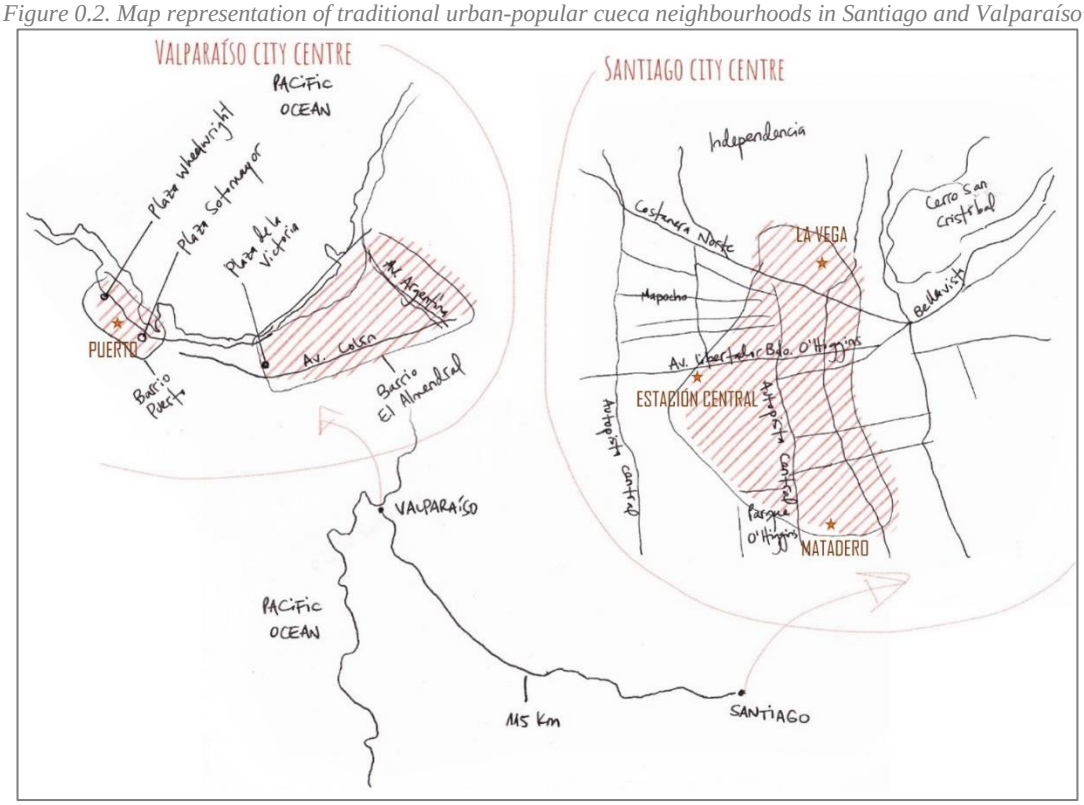



*Figure 0.2. Map representation of traditional urban-popular cueca neighbourhoods in Santiago and Valparaíso*[1]




*Source: own elaboration*

[1] These map representations were elaborated with information provided by Spencer (2016) and Martínez, Zamora and Rivera (2014), both works which provide a narrative mapping of traditional urban locations where the cueca was practised during the twentieth century, as told by practitioners and/or cueca lyrics. The neighbourhoods are connected as being locations for major industrial activities and relations between the capital (Santiago) and one of the biggest port cities in Chile (Valparaíso).

# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*The priest doesn't know how to plough,*
*or even less how to yoke an ox;*
*but with his holy law,*
*he reaps without sowing.*[2]

The above verses are representative of a period during which, according to Antonio Acevedo (2015 [1933]), '*el pueblo*[3] had learned to sing their pains' (73). Through his thorough scrutiny of the Chilean popular songbook during the beginning of the twentieth century, along with his own experience as a peasant worker, Acevedo was able to offer a detailed portrayal of the personality of the Chilean *popular*[4] subject, which is most commonly known as the *roto*. He described such people as apathetic, with little respect for life or love, as can be seen through his comparison between the Chilean and the Spanish *popular* songbooks. In his words:

> These people do not care about anything, nothing; they believe neither in their politicians nor their priests nor their wise men (…), they do not believe in life or death; they are used to suffering (…). An aristocrat revolution—that of 1810 [i.e. the independence revolution]—transferred them from slaves of the *encomendero*[5] to those of the—almost always foreign—tight-fisted landowner (…); everybody exploits them, they take advantage of their [labour] strength. (2014 [1953], 107)

At a given moment around the late nineteenth or early twentieth century *el pueblo* began to reject the unfair conditions of their own existence, giving rise to a more revolutionary *popular* poetry whereby they would protest in order to liberate 'the slave

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[2] Traditional couplet presented by the poet and scholar Julio Vicuña Cifuentes (1865-1936) in the inaugural discourse he gave at his own incorporation to the Chilean Academy within the Royal Spanish Academy in 1916. Cited from Acevedo (2015, 71). The original poem in Spanish verses as follows:

'El cura no sabe arar,
menos enyugar un buey;
pero con su santa ley
él cosecha sin sembrar.'

[3] *El pueblo* is one of the core concepts of this thesis, and it is duly defined and problematized throughout these pages (as well as in the glossary). It could be partially, but never totally, homologised with concepts such as 'the people' or 'the folk.' Nonetheless, the original Spanish word will remain in place for the sake of conceptual clarity. See glossary for definition.

[4] The concept of *lo popular* is crucial to the argument presented in this thesis, and it harbours a specific meaning that relates to a working class experience or identity. The concept is thoroughly defined across these pages as well as in the glossary. However, to avoid confusion, *italics* always indicate this association with class, as opposed to any other meanings of the term 'popular.' Although the term might not always be italicised when included in the phrase 'urban-popular,' this phrase will always involve this class connotation.

[5] *Encomendero* is the term to define the men who were endowed by the Spanish monarchy with an *Encomienda*—a group of indigenous people—during the Spanish colonisation in the Americas.

who used to sing—as the poet says—"in tune with its own chains"' (2015 [1933], 74). This new revolutionary impetus has to do with the consolidation of a movement that, around 1890, began to engage in political action against the systematic abuse by the dominant classes (Salazar Vergara 2012, 29-31). Demonstrations were faced with brutal repression, raising the public awareness of the need for a social change (De Ramón 2000, 194-196), which gradually contributed to imprint the *popular* poetry of the time with airs of resistance.

This chant of resistance has remained in Chilean *popular* expressions taking multiple shapes and nuances under the historical development of the Chilean society, and it can be clearly observed through the current process of *urban-popular cueca*[6] revival that has taken place in Chile during the past three decades.

My thesis offers a close reading of this cueca revival process, focusing on its social and cultural significance within the current Chilean society. It presents a historical glance over the development of the cueca as a musical and poetic genre alongside the development of the Chilean nation, to grasp the social and cultural implications of the revival process. Although several authors have undertaken this historical task in the past,[7] more socially-critical analyses have only been recently offered by a handful of scholars.[8] I believe my work embraces and builds on from the efforts of said scholars, to advance a more focused contemporary analysis, explicitly based on the revival process that began in the 1990s—roughly the same time when democracy was restored in Chile after Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990). Such an analysis engages with the concept of *popular* resistance in ways that had not been discussed before. By connecting different aspects of hierarchical orders in Chilean society—those imposed by nationalism, social class and gender—I have built a narrative of *popular* resistance through the practice of

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[6] *Urban-popular cueca* is the term I use to describe the stylistic variant of the cueca genre that constitutes the main focus of this revival process. It corresponds to the cueca as practised in certain *popular* neighbourhoods in Santiago and Valparaíso (see figures 0.1 and 0.2) roughly between the 1930s and the 1970s. It is also called *cueca brava*, *cueca chora* or *cueca chilenera*. The concept and its history are further explained in chapters 3 and 5, as well as in the glossary. Although the term *popular* might not always be italicised when included in the phrase 'urban-popular,' this phrase will always involve this class connotation.

[7] José Zapiola [1872], Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna [1882], Clemente Barahona [1913], Pedro Humberto Allende [1930], Carlos Vega [1947a, 1947b, 1953 and 1956], Eugenio Pereira Salas [1941], Pablo Garrido [1943 and 1979], Antonio Acevedo Hernández [1953], Samuel Claro Valdés [1979, 1983, 1993 and 1994], Margot Loyola [2001, 2010], Juan Pablo González [2005 and 2009] and Micaela Navarrete [2010]).

[8] Torres [2003, 2008 and 2010], Rojas [2009 and 2010], Spencer [2007, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014 and 2016], Donoso [2009 and 2010], Solís [2011 and 2013], Jordán [2011a, 2011b and 2014] and Izquierdo, Jordán and Torres [2016].

the cueca. Such a story has been informed by more than 40 interviews with practitioners, scholars and producers, as well as by my own field experience as part of the audience (participant observation at concerts and live music events) and as a music apprentice (through private lessons and workshops). I thus examine the enactment of cultural resistance across these three contexts of domination, and I highlight the festive quality of the cueca as the most important means for this resistance.

In the subsequent background section I introduce the genre of the cueca through a brief historical contextualisation, followed by some general definitions of the choreographic, poetic and musical form of the cueca along with the introduction of certain related cultural groups and practices (like *canto a lo poeta*, which is described below) that will appear often in the chapters to follow. This section will be crucial for the reading and understanding of chapter 4, where I present the stylistic history of the cueca.

## BACKGROUND: HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Cueca is a music and poetic form that accompanies the Chilean dance of the same name. Such dance is usually performed by couples that twirl and stomp inside imaginary circles (without embracing), moving their handkerchiefs along the cheerful shouts and rhythm of a fully involved cueca band, and symbolising an 'amorous pursuit' (Spencer Espinosa 2014, 237). According to Claro Valdés, Peña Fuenzalida and Quevedo Cifuentes (1994), 'Currently, we can extend this concept to a complex form of music, poetry, singing and dance, of Arab-Andalusian roots, which engendered various Latin American folk species, especially the Cueca or Chilena' (41-42).[9]

### The origins

According to Christian Spencer (2010), most scholars agree on its emergence being between 'the late eighteenth century (the riskiest ones), and the second decade of the nineteenth century (with all probability)' (70), resulting from the hybridisation processes between creole and Hispanic legacies. Most researchers of the genre agree that cueca was first seen and heard in Chile at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and was then known as *zamacueca*. Such is the testimony of José Zapiola, who observed that 'When leaving for my second trip to Argentina, in March 1824, this dance was not yet known. Upon my return, in May 1825, I ran into this novelty' (1974 [1872], 47-48).

[9] Some of these Latin American music genres are the *marinera* (Perú), the *chilena* (Ecuador, México), the *zamba* (Argentina), the *chacarera* (Argentina), etc.

Theorists propose at least three different paths through which it might have arrived. First, there is the Spanish origin, which is specifically related to the Arab-Andalusian cultural framework. Secondly, there is the African origin, which is explained by the presence of African slaves who were brought by the Spanish colonisers and spread throughout the whole continent. According to this theory, cueca would have been an African dance brought by the Slaves from Peru. And thirdly, an autochthonous origin, through which cueca would have developed within the Chilean territory, combining the foreign influences—which include the diversity of European, African, and Amerindian peoples in the territory—with local native elements.

The theory of the autochthonous origin is based on the statements of a few authors, some of whom refer to cueca as coming from the *Mapuche*[10] (Autrán [1886], Kilapan [1996]) native group of the south of Chile and Argentina; others relate cueca to *Diaguitas* (Garnham [1961]), native peoples from the north of Chile. The native origins have however been discarded by several authors, including Carlos Vega (1956), who explained that 'there are no data of [couple dances'] existence in Pre-Columbian America' (25), and Eugenio Pereira Salas (1941) who stated that 'The aboriginal tradition … has run through an independent path from that of the Creole, remaining in a religious secrecy of mystery and confraternity' (170).

The African origin was defended by Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna. In his polemic treaty titled *La Zamacueca y la Zanguaraña*, he explains that cueca is neither Peruvian nor Chilean. It was instead brought to Chile in the late eighteenth century by 'the African slaves that travelled through this land across Los Andes, Quillota and Valparaíso, towards the valleys of Lima, coming from the valleys of Guinea' (Vicuña Mackenna, 1882, cited in Garrido, 1979, 37). This theory has been discarded in the academic field of the cueca as well (see Pereira [1941], Vega [1956], and Garrido [1979]).

The Arab-Andalusian is the most widely accepted of the three, where the cueca appears as related in its multiple dimensions to several Spanish musical, poetic and dance forms. As a dance, it has been connected to the Spanish *fandango* (see Vega [1953] and Acevedo Hernández [2014]); and its poetry derives from the Spanish *Couplets* and *Seguidillas*. Fernando González Marabolí (1927-2006), a Chilean butcher who belonged

[10] *Mapuche* is the name of an indigenous group that is original from the south of Chile and Argentina. They have been also commonly called *Araucanos* in the literature, which is the name Spaniards used to refer to them, as they called their territory 'Arauco.'

to a family of *cuequeros* (cueca practitioners), inherited an urban tradition of cueca, which he believed to be faithful to the first glimpses of the genre that arrived with the Andalusian crew. At a given moment González got together with Chilean musicologist Samuel Claro Valdés (1934-1994), and together they published a treaty about cueca and its Arab-Andalusian roots, titled *Chilena o Cueca Tradicional* (1994), which is currently one of the most important documents available in Chile about cueca.[11]

Regarding the development of the academic discussion on the origins of cueca, Christian Spencer (2009) uses the concept of the *discursive canon* (or textual canon), which is a group of texts that explain an idea—a genre in this case—forming a corpus of discourses susceptible to classification. This corpus exerts agency over the genre in question, influencing both theoretical approaches and music developments, while dialoguing with corresponding hegemonic discourses. According to Spencer, the development of the discourses about cueca within its textual canon advances mainly through three key concepts: *origins*, *ethnicity* and *nation*. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the discussion was centred on matters of origins, with an undeniable link between the origins of cueca and its authenticity as a genre, where authors dispute the authority of the truth through their multiple narratives of origins. Given the lack of direct sources and records of the cueca's germinal stage, this discussion was proven sterile, and the interest shifted from origins to ethnicity in the second half of the nineteenth century. The aim now was to find an 'ethnic ancestor' to the cueca, which entailed 'the first major ethnographic discussion of a musical genre in Chile' (Ibid), pointing out four possible ethnic backgrounds: the white-Spanish, the indigenous, the African and the mestizo.

Notwithstanding they are all still plausible alternatives in current debates, most authors eventually preferred to leave the indigenous and the African options behind, opting for the Spanish-mestizo identity. Eugenio Pereira Salas, in his book *Los Orígenes del Arte Musical en Chile* (1941), was the first to abandon the indigenous and African cultural backgrounds. In turn, he staged the cueca within a Spanish-Mestizo ethnicity,

[11] It is important to acknowledge that the Spain that colonised America was, in Samuel Claro's words, a three-dimensional Spain, harbouring Jew, Christian and Arab cultures. We must also note that since July of 711 Spain was ruled by the Arabs, who were only expelled in 1492, the same year that Christopher Columbus arrived to the 'New World.' The new continent was about to be colonised and Christianised at any cost, as the Spanish kingdom was itself imprinting its Catholic mark over its reclaimed domains. The historical development of the Arabs in Al-Andalus and its relation to the cueca can be read in Claro Valdés, Peña Fuenzalida and Quevedo Cifuentes (1994, 23-41)

which in the aftermath was sub-classified into three different ethnic streams: Arab-Andalusian (Samuel Claro Valdés, among others), Hispanic-Peruvian (Carlos Vega, among others) and Hispanic-Chilean (Pablo Garrido, Antonio Acevedo, among others). Once this Spanish-Mestizo identity was hegemonically installed in the textual canon, it gave rise to the pursuit of a definition of this hybrid *Chileanness* in its relation to its cultural expressions, such as the cueca. Hence, the cueca started detaching itself from its original associations and became a de-historicised concept which was much more related to the abstract ideas of nationality. And when this happened, according to Spencer, an 'imagined community' was created, who 'gather[s] around the idea of the nation' (Spencer Espinosa 2013, 411). The cueca would materialise the sonic framework of this idea of the nation, serving as an educational tool which unified citizens under one national ideal (Ibid).

## The cueca as national identity

The cueca as a source of national identity has also been discussed by Araucaria Rojas, who through an analysis of the classical definitions of cueca—those of Samuel Claro Valdés, Manuel Dannemann, and Juan Pablo González, among others—questions the forced union between the notions of tradition and nationhood, going through the problematic ideas of purity and authenticity. She explains how through both the social and geographical transversality of the cueca, these authors can roundly state the quality of 'the national' that underlies the genre, without the need to explain what this nationality entails.

> When does the cueca-dance so closely overlap with the national identity, then *Chileanness*, to erect a symbol or representation of an identitary *in-itself*?[12] At what time or from which epochal moment does it pass from standing as a popular dance—also exerted by those attending the ballrooms—to being a custodian of the 'truly national,' presented as a transparent substance of our *collective soul*? (2010, 82)

The first element to explain this process of symbiosis between the cueca and the national is according to Rojas the political creation of a character that would embody this Chileanness: the *huaso*. Huaso and roto have been *popular* characters of Chilean culture since long ago, with the huaso belonging in rural environments and the roto within the city. While the roto represented the lumpen of urban society in Chile, the huaso represented the humble peasant of rural settings, which constituted a much safer referent to build an inclusive national identity, based on its innocuousness and picturesque

[12] My emphasis.

character. Thus, at a certain moment at the beginning of the twentieth century the figure of the huaso was turned into an idealised archetype 'stylised and sanitised,' and being attributed 'elements that have not belonged to it "traditionally," but from a very recent data' (83). This idealisation could be first observed during the Carlos Ibáñez Del Campo dictatorship (1927-1931), when 'nationalism is installed as a State policy,' to exhibit an exemplary Chilean inhabitant (Ibid). What followed was a process of legitimation of traditions that were once associated with the socially marginalised, and which were now being 'cleansed' and refined to fit the nationalist symbolism that the elites were trying to project. Two main occurrences enabled this process: the emergence of a series of huaso folkloric groups in the phonographic industry since the 1920s (84) and the foundation of the Faculty of Fine Arts in 1929 (86). This way, through academic research and the music industry, the huaso and his musical traditions were reinvented and installed at the core of a 'newly invented' Chilean national identity (Ibid). Several decades later, and during Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990), the figure of the huaso and the space of the rural would be once more employed as a political model of Chileanness.[13] As Rojas explains, 'there is a first moment—almost inaugural—in which the authoritarian government adopts a "founding nationalist discourse" where certain patriotic values are fitted with the concept of a "national ought-to-be"' (2009, 52). She explains how folk music was not entirely interrupted during the dictatorship, but rather widespread through the media of that time, 'provided it is harmless and instrumental' (53). During this epoch, there were several political instruments employed to reinforce this idea of the national, one of the most obvious being the Decree N°23 (1979).[14] The Decree installs cueca as the national dance, given its 'genuineness' with regards to its musical and choreographic aspects, the 'roguery belonging to the popular creativity' in its lyrics, and its historical validity, 'having identified the Chilean people since the dawn of independence' (N°23 Decree, 1979). The decree prescribes, among other things, that cueca is the Chilean national dance; that it has to be promoted by the educational and cultural institutions of the state; and that there will be an annual national dance championship for students throughout the whole country. There is, on the other hand, a wide spectrum of other styles of cueca that were left out of this desired national spirit, such as urban-popular cueca or *cueca brava*,[15] an urban stream of cueca which has remained as current—though

[13] This is further discussed in chapters 3 and 4.
[14] Full Decree available at:
http://www.leychile.cl/Navegar?idNorma=224886&idParte=&idVersion=1979-11-06.
[15] See glossary.

concealed—as the celebrated peasant cueca. Cueca brava was not only left out by the official media but also by the leftist communicational sources that were partially monitored by the government (Rojas Sotoconil 2009, 71), and it is this style of cueca the one which, once democracy was restored in 1990, was lifted to the centre of the cueca revival process.

## General Definitions

### The cueca dance

As a dance, cueca derives from what some have called *bailes de tierra* (ground dances), *bailes de chicoteo* or *danzas picarescas* (picaresque dances). All these concepts concern the idea of a detached-couple dance, where the choreographic dynamic expresses the amatory chase between a man and a woman, which Carlos Vega traces back to Europe in the sixteenth century, arriving at the Lombard *gallarda* dance (1956, 180).[16] As most Latin American dances, cueca has developed simultaneously in separate social settings, such as the aristocratic ballrooms—with an evident preference for aesthetic elements that would mark a white European identity—and the *chinganas*, which were *popular* taverns (sometimes brothels) where the dance would have the influence of *popular* subjects, rotos, peasants (or *huasos*), mestizos and slaves. As Alfredo Zubicueta (1908) noted, since its initial stage there have been two types of cueca: 'one aristocratic and the other popular,' where '[aristocratic] ballroom cueca is arranged choreography (…) [while] the popular one retains much of its original vividness and its quite pronounced animation untouched' (126).

### The cueca as *popular* poetry

Poetry is a crucial aspect of the cueca, with many of its practitioners establishing it as one of the most important defining characteristics of cueca, and it consists of the combination of poetic forms that were inherited from the Spanish world, such as the *copla* (couplet) and the *seguidilla*. Among several different strophic combinations that one can find among the prolific cueca songbooks in Chile, the most common and most widely accepted consists of fourteen verses. The first four verses form a copla, *cuarteta*, or

[16] See descriptions of the cueca dance in Vega (1956, p.160), (Vicuña Mackenna 1909 [1882]), Acevedo (1953, p.19), Garrido (1979, pp.57, 58, 64, 172-174), (Loyola and Cádiz, La Cueca: Danza de la Vida y de la Muerte 2010), among many others.

*redonda*—depending on its rhyming structure,[17] which may be assonant or consonant—that consists of four octosyllabic verses. The next eight verses form two seguidillas (or *siguiriyas*, as Samuel Claro (1994) prefers to call them) which consist of four alternated heptasyllabic and pentasyllabic verses. Here, the rhyme is between the alternated pentasyllabic verses.[18] And the last two verses form what is known as *cogollo*, *pareado*, *dístico*, or most commonly known as *remate*, which corresponds to the ending of the cueca. Figure 1.1 presents the cueca 'En el cuarto 'e la Carmela,' which illustrates this poetic form.

*Figure 1.1. The poetic form of the cueca*

**EN EL CUARTO 'E LA CARMELA**

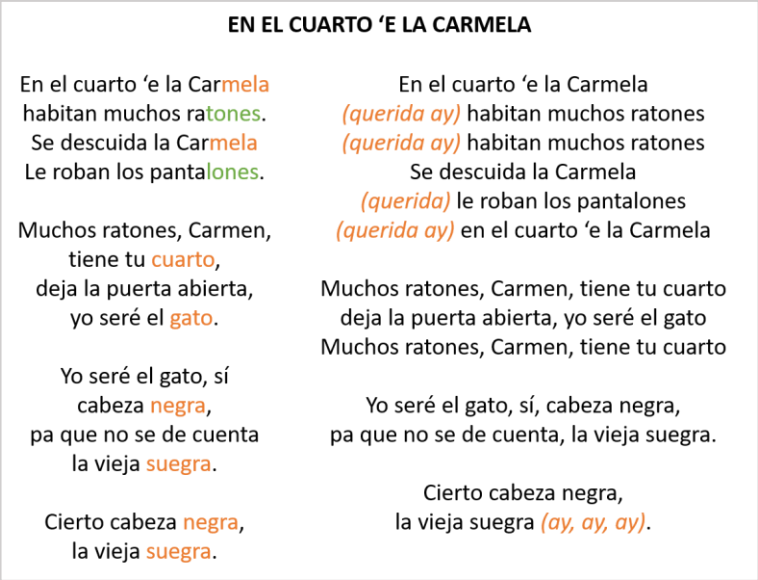
| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Cuarteta* | 1 | En el cuarto 'e la Carmela | 8 syllables |
| | 2 | habitan muchos ratones. | 8 syllables |
| | 3 | Se descuida la Carmela | 8 syllables |
| | 4 | Le roban los pantalones. | 8 syllables |
| *Seguidilla* | 5 | Muchos ratones, Carmen, | 7 syllables |
| | 6 | tiene tu cuarto, | 5 syllables |
| | 7 | deja la puerta abierta, | 7 syllables |
| | 8 | yo seré el gato. | 5 syllables |
| *Seguidilla* | 9 | Yo seré el gato, sí | 7 syllables |
| | 10 | cabeza negra, | 5 syllables |
| | 11 | pa que no se de cuenta | 7 syllables |
| | 12 | la vieja suegra. | 5 syllables |
| *Remate* | 13 | Cierto cabeza negra, | 7 syllables |
| | 14 | la vieja suegra. | 5 syllables |

It is very interesting to note that the cueca's poetic form is transformed in accordance with the music. This transformation operated through the addition of different (calculated) exclamations that are traditionally called *ripios* or *muletillas*, and through the repetition of some selected verses (Fig. 1.2).

[17] In the case of the copla, the second verse rhymes with the fourth one; in the cuarteta or quatrain, the first verse rhymes with the third, and the second with the fourth; and in the redonda, the first verse rhymes with the fourth, and the second with the third.

[18] According to Dorothy Clarke, 'The typical *seguidilla* is a four-verse strophe of alternating seven- and five-syllable verses, the even verses having assonance. The *seguidilla* is often followed by an *estribillo* of three verses—five, seven, five syllables—having assonance, different from the first, in the short lines. Line length may vary, and consonance occasionally replaces assonance' (1944, 211). In the case of Chilean cueca, we speak of two seguidillas, while it actually consists of one seguidilla followed by one *estribillo*, the latter of which takes the last line of the seguidilla and repeats it so that it can be transformed into the second seguidilla.

*Figure 1.2. Poetic transformation of the sung cueca*




Luis Gastón Soublette (1959) explains it as follows:

> Popular singers, with regards to Cueca, usually apply one melody or 'intonation' to several different texts, and this custom is so widespread among them that it is practically impossible to determine which text is the one that originally belonged to a given melody. … [This is the] procedure employed by the popular singers to sing any text with one given melody. (101)

So, as mentioned above, poetic form is a crucial element here, and especially in the world of *popular*/folkloric music, where *popular* poetry has been a vehicle to preserve and reveal the culture of the people through oral tradition. In this sense, cueca was one of the many forms in which *popular* poets and troubadours would illustrate the realities of their time. The most emblematic of the poetic forms employed by such poets was the *décima*, present throughout the whole of Iberian-America, and associated in Chile with the tradition of *canto a lo poeta* (or *paya*).

### *A note on the tradition of canto a lo poeta or paya*

Canto a lo poeta is the name given in Chile to the poetic-musical form that was inherited from the Spanish Jesuits who came along with the colonisers to evangelise the Amerindian population in the occupied continent. Eugenio Pereira Salas (1962) traces the origins of this lyric form back to the Spain of the fifteenth century, where *canto a lo Divino*[19] (singing to the Divine) derived from the *villancicos*, which were songs dedicated to the new-born Christ. To the figure of the troubadour followed that of the *glosador*, who would have introduced the religious stamp into the everyday lyric creations. These glosadores (plural) are described as being 'common people, usually illiterate, endowed

[19] See glossary for definition.

with the power to improvise in verse about any event that might impress them' (42). The operation of substituting the profane topics of poetry to sacred ones is what Eugenio Pereira calls *contrafactum*, which he understands as the divinisation of lyrical topics. This practice reached its highest level in Spain during the Renaissance period. Later on, when the Spanish conquerors expanded their domains to America, they brought with them these contrafactum glosses that remained in the continent until our days. The glosadores then became *copleros*, who constituted the most important figure of *popular* poetry in this territory. The author infers that 'the repertoire of these copleros, besides the common improvisations, were the romances, couplets and glosses, ties that bind the primitive Latin American poetry to its secular Hispanic trunk' (45). The figure that followed the copleros is called the *payador*, which is the *popular* poet still present in many parts of Latin America, including Chile. Of the payador, also named *huaso cantor*, Rodolfo Lenz affirms he has kept

> much of the middle age troubadour dignity, who likes to present his captivated audience, his recondite wisdom of a man of superior experience who knows the world. Like the sixteenth century "Meistersingers," it has nothing of the mendicant *coplero* of the fairs, but rather exercises art for art's sake and to win applause; he commonly devotes only his spare time, and earn his living by some business or honourable craft. (1919, 523)

The *popular* poet and scholar Francisco Astorga Arredondo (2000) refers to this tradition as 'sung poetry,' using the couplet or quatrain and the *décima espinela*, and can be labelled, in accordance with the topics it addresses, as *canto a lo humano*[20] or canto a lo Divino (56). This classification is believed to come from 'the Spanish songbooks of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the loose sheets of *popular* poetry that circulated abundantly through the American lands' (Uribe Echevarría 1974, 6). Now, the décima espinela has been in the continent since at least the seventeenth century. It takes its name from the Spanish writer and musician Vicente Espinel (1550-1642), who created this metric form, which consists of 10 octosyllabic verses whose rhyme is ABBAACCDDC. The décimas were steadily cultivated through oral tradition by *popular* poets or payadores. The art of the paya or *payada* (as known in Argentina and Uruguay), consists of the undertaking of poetic challenges and games by at least two contending poets, who must improvise verses using the décima metre.

The most prominent manifestation of canto a lo poeta's written expression came into practice during the nineteenth century. It did so through what is known as the *lira popular*, which is a sort of *popular* newsprint (broadsheets) where the people were able

[20] See glossary for definition.

to express their vision of the current events and social contingencies: 'Since the last century the Lira *Popular* has been the voice of the *popular* poet. The social and political events, the exaltation of peasant traditions, the counterpoints and challenges, write this other history of Chile, which rises from the land (…)' (Astorga Arredondo 1994, 9-10). The lira *popular* contained not only décimas but other poetic expressions among which we find cuecas as well. Such printed *popular* poetry is the material manifestation of a trend that Uribe understands as satirical décima, which he believed to be present in Chile during the whole of the nineteenth century, and the first thirty years of the twentieth century (9). It was a sort of *popular* press that involved a political account of reality, being present even in times of independence.

The cuecas that are present in the lira *popular* also share this social-political drive. In this sense, the relationship between canto a lo poeta and the cuecas is not only a formal one, concerning the sharing of the octosyllable and the couplet or quatrain in its initial verses, or the Spanish heritage in general, but also the intentionality and the social function it has served throughout the years. Such social function has not always been the same but has rather been as multiple as its stages of development. And we know there are different characters, where payador does not necessarily mean cuequero, but there are many times in which their coincidence has been demonstrated, and the lira *popular* is a vivid testimony of this (see Figures 1.3 and 1.4 for examples of an old and a current lira *popular*, respectively). Furthermore, today young cuequeros and *cantoras* (or female singers) within the revival cueca scene are becoming ever more committed with this social function of the *popular* poet/singer in multiple ways, which I examine on the chapters to follow.

*Figure 1.3. Lira Popular (ca.1880-1930)*

El Hombre descuerado en el Puente de las Animas en Valdivia

El Fantasma que apareció en el Cerro Santa Lucía

El hombre descuerado

El fantasma que apareció

Verso a lo Divino

Trajedito de un enamorado

Sobre las Olas

Glosa i Cuecas

Brindis a la Patrona

José Hipólito Casas Cordero

Poeta Santiaguino, calle Echáurren, número 607

Imprenta Moneda 145

*Source: Navarrete Araya, La Lira Popular. Poesía Popular Impresa del Siglo XIX. Colección Alamiro de Ávila 1999*

*Figure 1.4. Lira Popular (2013)*

# RUMORES DE TERCERA GUERRA MUNDIAL

## VERSO A LO DIVINO: La creación de la Tierra

**RUMORES DE TERCERA GUERRA MUNDIAL**

**La tercera guerra empieza**
**con insultos y amenazas**
**ya los bandos se preparan**
**por naciones y por razas.**

Ha sido korea del norte
con su líder dictador
el que provoca un ardor
en naciones de gran porte
ha dicho que quiere un corte
y de frente nos confiesa
que él va hacer una limpieza
en su tierra donde es dueño
y en un mundo tan pequeño
**la tercera guerra empieza.**

Kim Jong Un ya nos declara
que a todos llega la muerte
entonces por esa suerte
a la guerra se prepara
con ensayos ya dispara
miles de rojas brazas
su gobierno sobrepasa
los acuerdos de la paz
mas no hecha pies atrás
**con insultos y amenazas.**

Son la naciones unidas
las primeras que se oponen
y sus esfuerzos disponen
en tal cruel amenaza
ellos defienden la vida
del mundo que se separa.
No se sabe que depara
el futuro es tan incierto
y para que no hayan muertos
**ya los bandos se preparan.**

En korea mientras tanto
se hacen preparativos
probando dispositivos
que sólo crearán llanto
la guerra luce su manto
con arrogancia camaza
tiembla toda la maza
los gobiernos a la espera
esto afectara a la tierra
**por naciones y por razas.**

Al fin para terminar
los errores del pasado
se repiten a tal grado
que es difícil de explicar
esto debe de parar
porque a nadie le hace gracia
que por guerra la desgracia
nos pise la libertad
y nos nuble la verdad
que nos da la democracia.

**VERSO A LO DIVINO POR CREACIÓN**

**Cimiento sobre cimiento**
**sobre aquel cimiento un poste**
**sobre aquel poste un molino**
**sobre aquel molino un monte.**

Flotando sobre la nada
Dios le da forma a la tierra
para que siempre viviera
y también fuera poblada
así sin más ordenada
formo luz para portento
separa los elementos
y nombre de a la virtud
y vio que fue buena la luz
**cimiento sobre cimiento.**

Una vez que fue formada
esa bella claridad
nombrada a la obscuridad
para dejarla instaurada
las aguas son separadas
y agrupadas por sus portes
eso le debe soporte
a la hermosa creación
y en medio de la expansión
**sobre aquél cimiento un poste.**

Formó mares y praderas
hierbas semillas y frutos
y muchos mas atributos
sobre las bellas laderas
cubriendo la faz entera
del paraíso divino
el creador cristalino
forma le debe así al mundo
y adentro en lo mas profundo
**sobre aquél poste un molino.**

Formó Dios las estaciones
y los años con sus días
a las estrellas vigías
para completar sus dones
hizo seres por millones
arriba del horizonte
en el bosque con apronte
para ser multiplicados
y en la tierra con agrado
**sobre aquél molino un monte.**

Al fin para terminar
hizo Dios a Adán y Eva
y les dio vida longeva
para poder señorear
en esta tierra habitar
en amor y armonía
preservar la hegemonía
del amor y la verdad
les dijo fructificad
este mundo día a día.

**VERSO POR SABIDURÍA**
**LIBRO DE LOS PROVERBIOS, 16, 6**

**Fácil el conocimiento**
**es para aquél que lo entiende**
**el que esto no comprende**
**carece de entendimiento.**

Sabios y buenos cantores
que en la lengua hacen su nido
ténganse por entendidos
cuando laruan sus clamores
el que sabe sus tenores
no se turba en fundamentos
no lo apresionan tormentos
ni se atormenta en preguntas
como es uno con la yunta
**fácil el conocimiento.**

Si preguntan yo respondo
cantándole al unísono
es el verbo a lo divino
fundamento del más hondo
y si existe un lo redondo
otros al que esto prende
es el canto el que pretende
entregar una lección
que si se abre el corazón
**es para aquél que lo entiende.**

De letrados dijo un rey
la estupidez y el engaño
es de algunos un rebaño
que no reconoce la ley
es un arado sin buey
un peón que desatiende
es un fuego que no prende
un agua que no refresca
una red que no dió pesca
**el que esto no comprende.**

Una suave melodía
abre millones de puertas
mas el tumulto despierta
al escuchar poesía
yo canto sabiduría
cimiento sobre cimiento
tengo más conocimiento
estando medio callado
el que esto no ha captado
**carece de entendimiento.**

Al fin cuando me despido
cogollito de romero
este canto que yo quiero
es mi casa y es mi nido
por el soy agradecido
de entender algunas claves
mas si algunas duda cabe
nunca es malo preguntar
aquí estoy pa contestar
lo que ni los sabios saben.

**Cueca de los copetes**

No ha de faltar en la fiesta
algo para celebrar
con tanto trago distinto
no sé que voy a tomar.

Quizás un vino tinto
o un combinao
y si me voy pal puerto
su navegao

Su navegao si
chicha o pihuela
con chacolí o pajeño
yo toco el cielo

Y pa los más valientes
el aguardiente.

**Cueca para el enamorado**

Si usted siente mariposes
y cupido lo ha flechado
yo le dedico esta cueca
como buen enamorado

amor apasionado,
dulce o sufrido
o amores generosos
¿Quién no ha tenido?

¿Quién no ha tenido, Sí?
un amor ciego
y aquél que ama a dos
juega con fuego

Cuídese de cupido
yo se lo pido.

**Cueca del completo**

El tomate palta mayo
representa nuestro Chile,
con chucrut o americana
con sus variedades miles

Comense uno gigante
es gran hazaña,
pero uno bueno arregla
La peor caña

La peor caña si
rico completo
pe los vegetarianos
su quesopleto

Hoy tenemos el As
pal más capaz.

Brindaré por el amor
por el amor que me diste
y conmigo compartiste
con libertad y sin temor
así hoy brindaré por
el tan fresco manantial
de este amor tan celestial
en cuyo brazos mi alma vuela
que nos arrulla y consuela
y nos protege del mal.

Brindo por las sopaipillas
y por las papas con mote,
por el curanto chilote
y por la rica tortilla.
Esta comida sencilla
de mi Chile tan amado
por la empaná, el asado
las humitas con chilena
por las carnetas tan buenas
con cilantrito picado.

Brindo por Valparaíso
con sus múltiples colores,
por que inspira a soñadores
cautivando con su hechizo.
Su postal es un aviso
entre cuestas colgantes
invitando a los amantes
entre su entrebijo y ensueño
a pisar suelo porteño
hoy y siempre cuanto antes.

Yo brindo por la cerveza
tan refrescante en verano
que si se pasa la mano
se nos sube a la cabeza.
Sea clara o sea espesa
es un trago ancestral,
es la rubia más leal
que a celebrar nos invita
aunque estén las morenitas
y las rojas sin igual.

PLIEGO IMPRESO A LA MANERA DE LA ANTIGUA LIRA POPULAR

VERSOS:El Quiltro y la Charagüilla
XILOGRAFÍA:Claudia Salas Vergara

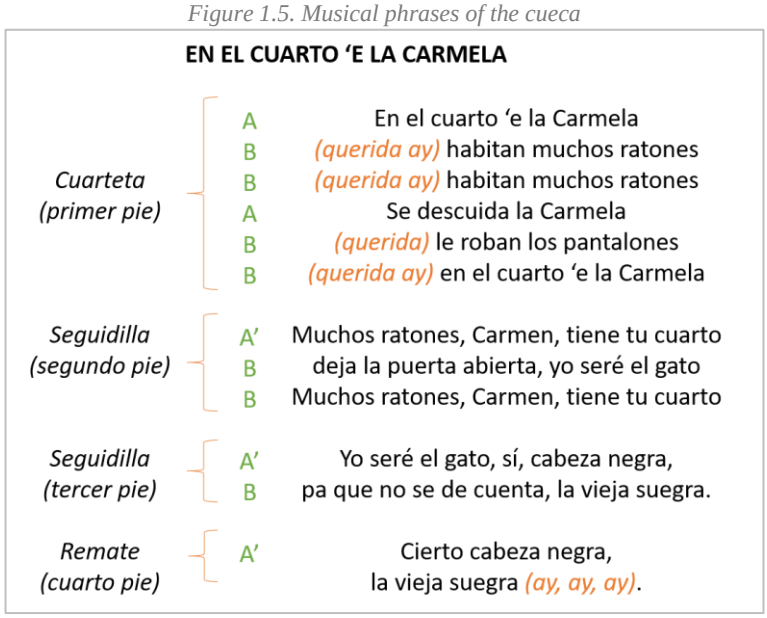
Proyecto financiado por el Fondo Nacional de Desarrollo Cultural y las Artes. Ámbito Regional Convocatoria 2013

*Source: Digital file personally given to me by one of its authors, the cantora and payadora Daniela Sepúlveda.*

## The music of the cueca

In terms of music, the cueca consists of mainly two musical phrases, (A) and (B), that can be either in a 3/4, 6/8 or 3/8 metre. These phrases alternate as follows: ABBABB ABB AB A, normally forming a total of 48 measures. Poetic forms are distributed as follows: the copla (or *primer pie*) is formed by ABBABB, then to the first seguidilla (or *segundo pie*) corresponds ABB, to the second seguidilla (*tercer pie*), AB and to the remate (*cuarto pie*) the final A (see Figure 1.5). Melodically, phrases A and B develop in a reciprocal, sort of question-answer, manner. Normally cueca has a rhythm of 3/8 or 6/8,[21] though it can frequently change to 3/4, thereby creating hemiolas.[22]

*Figure 1.5. Musical phrases of the cueca*




The fundamental 'internal pulse of cueca,' as some practitioners call it, rests on stressing the 2nd and 3rd quavers. Such an emphasis makes the 1st beat difficult to identify thus giving the cueca its syncopated feel. Melodies are most commonly developed in major scales, although urban cuecas also use minor scales. Harmonically, the music usually alternates between the I and V triads, also frequently utilising the subdominant (IV) function, or the secondary dominant (V/V). When it is in minor scale, its most recurring chord progression is the diatonic phrygian tetrachord (VI-V-IV-III), also called Andalusian cadence. The cueca form generally completes 48 measures, though different versions may range between 44 and 56 (Loyola and Cádiz 2010, 121). The way of

[21] Santiago Figueroa (2004) argues that most performers have not been able to interpret the rhythmic richness of cueca, transforming it instead into a very stable and exhaustingly repetitive rhythm (19).
[22] There are also some cases in which they take a 2/4 or 4/4 meter, especially in Chiloé, an island in the South of Chile.

translating the cueca's poetic lyrics into its musical form presented above is only one of many—perhaps the most common—and this is why the resulting number of bars may vary (see Figueroa 2004, Garrido (1976 [1943]), Vega 1947a and Castro González 2010). Carlos Vega (1947a) considers this transformation a unique Chilean cultural product, explaining that

> The singer, then, sections and distributes verses, adds *ripios* and choruses, hums, duplicates syllables, repeats fragments; in short, he deforms the traditionally formed elements. But this disintegration obeys a construction process, as it is just about recreating the new poetic forms that are to be adjusted to the musical phrases. There are recreation norms and its products, meaning they do not generally coincide with those of the Castilian poetic, which constitute the group of *Sui Generis* forms of Chilean cueca. (19)

## RATIONALE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: ON THE CONCEPT OF *POPULAR* RESISTANCE

As has been acknowledged by several historians, the emergence of the Chilean cueca roughly coincided with the country's birth as an independent republic, and ever since, it has fluctuated between being prohibited—considered one of the most distasteful expressions of Chilean culture—and being declared a national symbol—even legally in both cases. Both acceptance and rejection have acquired political, social, racial[23] and gender-based tones, which at different moments of the cueca's long history have spoken about multiple positions of domination and resistance. This thesis presents how such positions have taken place during the recent developments of the ongoing urban-popular revival process that started in the early 1990s. My main argument is that during the past three decades the practice of urban-popular cueca has represented a space for *popular* resistance, and I aim to analyse said *popular* resistance through the specificities of its Latin American context. This is not to say that the cueca was not a space of resistance before the revival. My research, however, is specifically concerned with the revival process and the cultural, social, and political changes that have accompanied it, especially in so far as this process began roughly at the same time that democracy was restored in

[23] I will not delve here into the racial aspects of the historical reactions towards the cueca, as this was not an issue that appeared as clearly as the other ones (political, social, gender-based) in my research. However, it is worth pointing out that racial discrimination in Chile has historically been closely associated with classism. To put it very simply, due to the colonial history, the complex process of mestizaje has led to evident discrimination towards the native communities. However, in a contemporary Chile, between the 9% who consider themselves as belonging to indigenous groups (Ministerio de Desarrollo Social 2017), and the 6.6% of (recent) immigrants (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas 2018), there is a majority of 84.4% of people who consider themselves as Chileans (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas 2018). Thus, even when in Chile there is a historical unspoken racial discrimination with regards to indigenous origins, today such discrimination has been disguised as classism, pointing towards the figure of the *roto* (urban-popular subject, who is, incidentally, mestizo). This will be discussed in more detail in chapters 4 and 5.

Chile after Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990). Although Chile is now a democratic country and has been so since 1990, the transition towards a real democracy has developed quite slowly, and as we will see in further chapters, in the present time there are still remnants of the dictatorship in Chilean society. These traces of authoritarianism are what post-dictatorship youths are today resisting through diverse expressions of *popular* culture, one such being the urban-popular cueca.

Both domination and resistance have to be understood as complex shifting dynamics rather than fixed realities, which is why I undertake the analysis of three different aspects of the revivalist urban-popular cueca scene—a scene that is of course constituted by a diversity of actors, interests and situations. Three sources of domination/resistance relations emerge from this scene: nationalism (and folklorisation), social class, and gender. Also, the cultural specificity of this revival process involves the understanding of the cueca as the *fiesta popular*, a broader concept that I believe helps to better understand how the cueca can be a source of resistance. Hence, in the sections to follow, I briefly outline how I understand the concepts of resistance and the *fiesta popular*.

## The concept of resistance

My use of the concept of resistance is primarily based on the idea that resistance and domination are reciprocal positions that require the existence of each other in order to operate. In other words, there cannot be resistance without domination, and *vice versa*. I borrow this understanding from Gramsci's (and Williams's) concept of hegemony. As Williams (1977) duly noted,

> The reality of any hegemony, in the extended political and cultural sense, is that, while by definition it is always dominant, it is never either total or exclusive. At any time, forms of alternative or directly oppositional politics and culture exist as significant elements in the society. (113)

Thus, under the conceptualisation of hegemonic dynamics, domination is never absolute. Rather, dominant groups must deal with these other forces either by assimilating or controlling them, as 'any hegemonic process must be especially alert and responsive to the alternatives and opposition which question or threaten its dominance' (Ibid). This interactive process might even lead to the loss of the dominant position. Therefore, the idea of reciprocity arises as a constitutive condition of any sort of domination.

Reciprocity as a condition for domination is also considered in Foucault's understanding of power and resistance in relational terms. For Foucault (1978), power is

engendered by 'the moving substrate of [unequal] force relations,' (93), and 'is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations' (94). Likewise, he understands resistance in terms of a multiplicity of positions of exercise where 'the strategic codification of these points of resistance (…) makes a revolution possible, somewhat similar to the way in which the state relies on the institutional integration of power relationships' (96). In other words, Foucault considers both power and resistance as the—multiple and dissimilar, 'local and unstable' (93)—resulting states of strategic force relationships.

James Scott (1990) builds on from Foucauldian notions of power and resistance, and he characterises a mechanism of subaltern resistance whereby dominated groups can conceal their real political discourse through what he calls the 'hidden transcripts,' which give way to the possibility of 'a sharply dissonant political culture.' Resistance is enabled through an intermediate position between hidden and overt political contents, creating 'a politics of disguise and anonymity that takes place in public view but is designed to have a double meaning.' This politics of disguise may take the shape of multiple peasant folk traditions and rituals (18-19), and indeed, 'ideological insubordination of subordinate groups (…) takes a quite public form in elements of folk or popular culture' (156-157). I argue that the practice of urban-popular cueca constitutes a good example of this way of exercising resistance, making special reference to Scott's idea of the carnival as a ritualistic sphere that constitutes a 'realm for release' of the social inhibitions suffered by subaltern groups (172-175). It is precisely this association between the cueca and the carnivalesque that allows me to build the concept of the cueca as the *fiesta popular* in Chile.

## The *fiesta popular*

The theoretical contexts under which I understand the *fiesta popular* require a brief deconstruction of the concept to analyse each of its constituent terms—*fiesta* and *popular*. The Spanish term fiesta translates in the English language as 'party,' 'holiday,' 'feast,' 'festival,' or 'carnival,'[24] all of which, combined, can give us a sense of what I mean by 'fiesta' in the context of this thesis. There is yet another sense that I still have not been able to find either in dictionaries or in Latin American anthropological literature, which refers to the fiesta as the quality of 'festiveness,' a tendency towards the festive, a celebratory impulse that is shared by a community. The closest definition I have found of

[24] These are some of the terms thrown by the Google Translate browser.

this sense of the word fiesta is by the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language (RAE n.d.),[25] which defines fiesta as '*diversión, regocijo,*' translated as 'entertainment, amusement.' Indeed, this concept of fiesta has much to do with the idea of enjoyment, or even that of joy, as a state that groups or communities can go in and out of. And this is the notion that many cueca practitioners have referred to when defining the cueca as fiesta, some of whose accounts can be read through the following quotes:

> [The cueca] is the 'synthesis of the Chilean song' but it is the synthesis of *popular* wisdom, and where does the *popular* wisdom manifest itself? In the gathering, therefore, the cueca is the *fiesta*, it is the only Chilean rhythm [that is] really festive. (Rodrigo Miranda, personal communication, 23rd January 2017)
>
> …Uruguay's carnival is [the *murga*], but the Chilean carnival is the cueca… (Josi, personal communication, 12th January 2017)
>
> To see the cueca as the *fiesta*, because at the end that was Nano Núñez's vision, the main aspect of the cueca is the festive one. (Diego Barrera, personal communication, 6th May 2016)
>
> The cueca is an emotion; you can be bitter and sad, and just by listening to a cueca, you forget everything; it fills the soul. (…) The cueca is cheerfulness, people can sing about anything, and with a *chilena*[26] the people vibrate, they immediately become joyful, and everybody. (María Esther Zamora, personal communication, 7th April 2016)
>
> And this is what comes to the surface in the 1990s because it fascinated the young people who had resisted adopting the *huasito* costumes for the 18th [of September] at school. They start to know this world that, it was not the cueca in itself, [but rather] like the fact of being this cueca and the other one, like the axis of *popular* conviviality in festive frameworks, the *fiesta popular*. (Rodrigo Torres, personal communication, 30th March 2016)
>
> This is what grabs you from the cueca: that it's like an identity certificate, it's like the queen of the party, and it is alive. (Tatiana, personal communication, 23rd April 2016)
>
> [The cueca] is a festive expression (…) a *fiesta* in poetic and musical formulae, but, it is a cultural, social, spiritual expression; it's really deep what it involves. (Leslie, personal communication, 23rd January 2017)

[25] http://lema.rae.es/drae2001/srv/search?id=JNGbdgrnFDXX2DpT3xI6

[26] *Chilena* is another way to refer to the Chilean cueca. The term is most commonly used within the urban-popular cueca scene.

*Figure 1.6: La Fiesta Popular*

*Source: Fieldwork photos and documents, 2016*

Néstor García-Canclini (1995) argued that scholars have insufficiently addressed the concept of 'the popular'—*lo popular*[27] in Spanish—explaining that only a few efforts have been made to elaborate a 'scientific discourse on the popular;' most of the literature produced before the 1960s has rather been guided by 'ideological and political interests.' For García-Canclini, 'the current theoretical crisis in research on the popular derives from the indiscriminate attribution of this notion to social subjects formed in different processes' (147), such as those related to 'folklore, the culture industries and political populism' (146). He alternatively explains *lo popular* as being 'constituted in hybrid and complex processes, using as signs of identification elements originating from diverse classes and nations' (157). Rowe and Schelling (1991) also offer a reading of popular culture in Latin America in reference to the contexts of the rural world, contemporary cultures, and subaltern, alternative, hegemonies, adding that the concept has been theorised upon within the disciplinary frameworks of both folklore and mass culture (2-3). We will see that the complexity of the term *lo popular* lies precisely on the ambiguity of its disciplinary frameworks (folklore and mass culture), which, in turn, entail different meanings in Anglophone and Hispano-phone contexts. Considering this understanding, I would add that in the Latin American context the notion of *lo popular* holds a specificity

[27] To avoid confusions, when discussing the term 'popular' in the Spanish-Latin American sense—and particularly in relation to its working-class connotation—I have italicised it. I also often address it in Spanish, as *lo popular*.

imprinted by the colonial experience. More specifically, the concept of class is differently understood in Chile and Latin America than in Europe and the United States. It is important to note that the effects of colonialism first and capitalism later have given rise to global class distinctions which have imprinted a cultural specificity over the meaning of *lo popular* in the Latin American context. This is important because capitalism in Chile was precisely imposed in the context of these global hierarchies—and their local correlatives—which emerged from colonisation, having situated certain countries at the centre of power and others on peripheral positions. Thus, to understand the concept of class in Chile, it is important to acknowledge these differences.

In general terms, I understand *lo popular* to be intrinsically connected with *el pueblo*[28] (which roughly translates as 'the people' or 'the folk,' terms that will be addressed in chapter 4), a specific social group that is linked to a working-class experience and identification.[29] But how can we understand the concept of working-class, and quite importantly, that of middle-class, in Chile? First, it is important to note that Chile is particularly characterised by its high social inequality.[30] Hence, the subject of social class is a sensitive one, with, for example, the richest 10% concentrating nearly the 40% of the income, while the poorest 10% concentrates only 1% (Ministerio de Desarrollo Social 2011). Additionally, to define class belonging is complicated because although one can measure certain objective parameters—such as income, occupation, and access to cultural and consumption goods—subjective identifications with any given class will not necessarily coincide with those measurements. And this explains why, while the people I interviewed from the urban-popular cueca revival scene belong mostly to middle-class, they all identify with *lo popular*, and particularly the figure of the *roto*, which they reflect on their artistic proposals. As noted by Frederick Moehn (2012), 'Class is (…) also partly (re)produced by individual acting subjects, and like these other dimensions [gender, race, and ethnicity], it can be performed' (14).[31] In this sense, one of the most relevant points that I want to highlight of the notion of *lo popular* is that, rather than being a social class, it is an identity, which can be performatively appropriated.

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[28] See glossary.
[29] As we will see in chapter 3, this is one of the key emphases of the Spanish language connotation of the term *popular* when it is applied to the concept of popular music.
[30] For instance, Chile is the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) country with the highest inequality index (La Tercera 2016).
[31] On this matter, this article by Barozet (2017) is quite interesting: https://ciperchile.cl/2017/04/10/es-usted-de-clase-media-probablemente-no/

Now, the *fiesta popular* is the celebratory drive of those who identify themselves as belonging to *el pueblo*, a quality that in its ritual aspect becomes a locus for *popular* resistance. As noted by Roger Rasnake (1988), 'ritual symbols can serve a conflicting role in the struggle for power and against oppression' (213). For this author,

> Ritual is a kind of 'social drama' (Turner 1974: 23-59)—it describes social relations and constructs the central meanings that orient a group's actions; but it also transforms in the very process of description, reformulating those meanings in such a way that social relations may be fundamentally altered. (214)

The ritual aspect of the cueca can be fully understood through the practice of *canto a la rueda*,[32] which is thoroughly analysed in chapter 5. Here, the cueca becomes a *social rite*—in the words of some of my consultants—that opens up an opportunity of resistance for the people who practise it 'despite the persecutions and harassment from dominant classes, who wanted to erase (…) *popular*[33] customs and traditions' (Chinganeros 2017). The following chapters will offer a detailed overview of how the cueca and the *fiesta popular* have offered a space for resistance in the context of long-standing power struggles against political, social and gender-based dominance.

## METHODOLOGY

I got to know the world of cueca and Chilean folk traditions some years before I started this PhD. During 2012 and 2013, I was working as a researcher in charge of the Cultural Heritage area of one of the regional councils of the Chilean Ministry of Culture. My main task there was to do an inventory of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage in the region (6th region of Chile, of the Libertador General Bernardo O'Higgins), which entailed, among other things, the documentation of musical practices such as the cueca and the *canto a lo poeta* (or *paya*).[34] Throughout these two years, I got to learn and become emotionally attached to these Chilean *popular* poetry and music practices. I made some excellent friends who have accompanied my research efforts to this day. Between September and December 2014, when I was already registered to start my PhD in January 2015, I went to Chile for a preliminary fieldwork trip, where I did some interviews with folk practitioners, I visited archives, and I got to know some renowned Chilean folk musicians, such as Margot Loyola. I then came to London to begin my PhD research with quite some field information to begin.

[32] See glossary for definition.
[33] My emphasis.
[34] See glossary for definition.

My research has predominantly been undertaken through ethnographic methods, applied over three different fieldwork trips in Santiago de Chile—with a couple of weekend visits to the port city of Valparaíso on each of the field trips as well. The first one was between February and May 2016, where I mainly dedicated myself to inhabit the urban-popular cueca scene in Santiago from different experiential positions. On one side, I took private harp lessons every week during those three months, and I also enrolled in a canto a la rueda workshop that was held weekly during nine weeks between March and May. All of my lessons have been recorded, and I took note of my thoughts right after each lesson. Secondly, I went to as many live cueca presentations as possible, which I attended by myself or with family and friends. I went to at least two or three presentations per week, so I got to know many different cueca bands and venues during those months. During these visits, I took field notes, recordings, photos and videos, as I took part in the events through the enjoyment of food, drinks and live music. I also recorded my thoughts in my field notes right after the events, when I had got back home. And thirdly, I interviewed around 12 cueca practitioners, bands, or related people from other fields such as academia or the music industry. I mostly got to contact these people through other cuequeros that I had previously met, or by approaching them at their live presentations. My interviews were varied. In some cases, I was already friends with the consultants, so they entailed a full afternoon, day or even weekend of sharing daily life and conversation. While in other cases, I did not know the participants, so it was directly a 45-minute interview at a café, bar, or community centre, usually, a venue proposed by them.

These three ethnographic methods—music lessons, participant observation and semi-structured interviews—accompanied my whole research experience. In my second field trip, which lasted five weeks between December 2016 and January 2017, I also took some music workshops. I repeated the canto a la rueda workshop I had taken the year before, and additionally, I took two courses—one *pandero* course and canto a la rueda singing course—offered by another cueca practitioner. I also attended live cueca shows and interviewed some other 18 practitioners and related people of the urban cueca scene. This time my fieldwork was more focused on bands and venues I had not got the chance to visit in my previous field trip. I took a third field trip for three weeks in August 2017 where I mostly interviewed people I had not had the chance before, looking to answer much more specific questions—mostly related to gender and the revival process—as at that point my research aims and topics had been quite narrowed down. Upon my return to London, I implemented some more interviews that I had pending, through Skype,

completing around forty interviews in total. As it will be noticed, my fieldwork experience crosses over this whole thesis, and the voices of my consultants have been truly fundamental to all of my scrutiny.

Another valuable source of inspiration has been, of course, bibliographic consultation. An essential part of the bibliographic corpus with which I have dialogued through these pages is the Chilean textual production on the cueca and other related musical traditions throughout the twentieth century. Key examples are Claro and others (especially 1994), González and others (especially 2005 and 2009), Torres, Spencer, Jordán and Solís. For each chapter I have also engaged with international scholars in the Humanities and Social Sciences, especially from the fields of Sociology, Anthropology and Ethnomusicology, of whom the most inspiring have been Williams (1977), Foucault (1978), Scott (1990), García-Canclini (1995), and Rowe and Schelling (1991), for my understanding of *lo popular* and *popular* resistance (chapters 1, 3 and 5); Koskoff (1987, 2014), Etherington (2004), Bartleet (2009) and Ellis (2009, 2015) in relation to reflexive research methods, music and gender, along with Deleuze (and Guattari) (1983, 1995 and 2001) and Frith (1996) on the sketching of my idea of becoming a cueca practitioner (chapter 2); Jordán and Smith (2011), Hutchingson (2011), González (1996, 2016), again, Rowe and Schelling (1991), and Torres (2003) for discussions on the meanings of folklore and popular music accross English and Spanish speaking contexts, as well as the proposal of my idea of *música popular* in the context of this thesis (chapter 3); Livingston (1999), Middleton (2007) and Allen (2010) on music revivals (chapter 5); and, De Beauvoir (1949), Butler (1999, 2004) and Bryson (2003) on global gender histories and conceptualisations, along with Paz (1981), Montecino (1997), Carreño (2007) for a more regional outlook of these topics (chapter 6).

In particular, archival research has been of extreme importance for chapter 4 (the stylistic history of the cueca), and I highlight the tremendous work done by Felipe Solís Poblete on the site *Cancionero de Cuecas* (Cancionero de Cuecas n.d.). This chapter has required a very strict methodological approach. The task of building a stylistic history of the genre through comparative musical analyses of examples dating from over more than a century has been ambitious. But I do hope it has resulted in an eloquent way to present a relatively (internationally) unknown genre while also taking advantage of the massive range of archival material that is available for consultation. My methodology for this chapter consisted of several steps: (1) I listened to a survey of +300 cuecas ranging between 1906 and 2017; (2) I classified them in a spreadsheet in order to find the 20-30

most recurring melodies, as a criterion to choose my examples for analysis; (3) I chose and transcribed the scores for 25 of those 300+ melodies; (4) I chose eight of those 25 melodies to make a comparative analysis between different versions of those eight cuecas. The criteria for choosing these eight cuecas are duly explained in chapter 2, but they mostly had to do with the versions available of each of the cuecas—and the social and historical contexts they represented, as well as the different musical styles that could be noticed in each of the versions; (5) I transcribed the scores of 30 versions of those eight cuecas (around three to five versions per cueca example); and (6) I presented a comparative musical analysis of each of those eight cueca examples considering both the socio-historical background and the musical features—and of course, how they relate to each other—of each one of the versions that constituted an example. The synthesis required from a thesis chapter limited the possibilities of my analysis; however, I believe this constitutes a valuable first step in presenting a socio-musical overview of the Chilean cueca genre, thus entailing a significant contribution to the field, and opening up interesting possibilities for future research.

Finally, I came across reflexivity as a method, which has proved to be crucial for the analysis and interpretation of my music learning process throughout these years of research. Reflexive research methods have allowed me to build a narrative of my process of becoming a cueca practitioner while making sense of the meanings of this process in terms of their ethnomusicological relevance. Furthermore, they have allowed me to address my positionality within my research process, which knowingly or not, has been central to my work. In other words, through this method I have been able to place my personal experience as both researcher and musician as another valuable source of information to combine with more general theoretical explorations, thus articulating theory and practice in meaningful ways.

## THESIS STRUCTURE

As explained above, reflexivity has been an essential discovery in so far as it has contributed to addressing what I have come to understand as one of the central aspects of my thesis: positionality. Thus, chapter 2 constitutes a relevant opening chapter where I address my music-learning process during these four years of PhD research, and I characterise it as a process of musically and socially becoming a cueca practitioner. My analysis has also delved on how such a becoming process has involved a personal battlefield in which the political, social and gender-based dispositions that come from my cultural upbringing have been challenged through the experience of learning the music of

the cueca. Chapters 3 and 4 are historical chapters that serve to clearly illustrate the social and stylistic developments that have led to the current revival period. In chapter 3, I present a brief social history of the cueca with special focus on the conceptualisation of several critical terms such as *lo popular*, folklore and popular music on the one hand, and rural and urban styles of cueca with their corresponding archetypes *huaso* and *roto*, on the other hand. I address some of these terms as they have been applied over the genre throughout its history, with special consideration of their specific meanings in Anglophone and Hispano-phone contexts. In the context of this thesis, the concept of folklore is mostly analysed in the context of its instrumentalisation as a device for state control.[35] I thus propose that the shifts that have taken place throughout the urban-popular cueca revival process have contributed to a process of *de-folklorisation* of the cueca as a whole. Chapter 4 illustrates this historical context by presenting the genre of the Chilean cueca through a historical overview of its stylistic developments in combination with its socio-historical context. In chapter 5, I engage with the concept of music revival as outlined by Tamara Livingston (1999), among others, and present the cueca revival as a case study that contributes to new perspectives on the analysis of the concept. At the same time, I address the concept of *popular* resistance as discussed by James Scott (1990), among others, and I comment on how the cueca has been historically articulated from a class perspective. I also examine the process by which the urban-popular revivalists have discursively and performatively embraced such a class perspective, through which they enact *popular* resistance in the context of their understanding of the cueca as the *fiesta popular*. And in chapter 6, I present a discussion of gender and feminism, analysing how both global and regional Latin American perspectives have informed the views on gender that are being advanced today in Chile. In this framework, I examine the process through which female cueca (and folk music) practitioners have performatively articulated the archetype of the contemporary urban cantora as a means of resistance in the context of a male-dominated music scene.

[35] See glossary.

# CHAPTER 2: REFLEXIVE RESEARCH METHODS. A PROCESS OF BECOMING A CHILEAN CUECA PRACTITIONER

## INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present an overview of the learning processes I have undergone throughout these past four years of research on the Chilean cueca. I focus primarily on my formal music learning through private lessons and workshops, but I also include the equally important, albeit more informal, experiences of learning through social interactions such as the developing of friendships and working companionships between cueca practitioners and me. Thus, using reflexive research methods, this chapter aims to introduce the reader to my scrutiny by first addressing my positionality within the field. Reflexivity allows me to reassemble the learning experiences of these past years and to combine them with those belonging to my background to theoretically problematize specific issues I have found to be extremely important about the position of the ethnographic researcher inside and outside the field. Most importantly, I address my whole research experience as a process of *becoming*; becoming a Chilean-cueca apprentice, composer, and performer, with an essential focus on all of the extra-musical elements one needs to incorporate in order to really be able to interpret the cueca—which I now am able to do, though still somewhat precariously.

Now, how does one become a Chilean-cueca practitioner? And what does it mean, to become such a practitioner? By no means can it be reduced to the mere activity of performing the Chilean cueca. As will be discussed through these chapters, cueca practitioners understand the genre as dialoguing with different styles depending on the scene they come from, ranging from tangos, Peruvian waltzes, boleros or cumbias, to tonadas, polkas, sirillas, and several other regional folk dances. This is equally the case for traditional or contemporary cantoras, old- or new-generation cuequeros, consecrated folklorists or innovative *popular* musicians.

Moreover, being a cueca practitioner cannot be reduced only to the music in itself, but should include the social dimension that surrounds the music. To put it in other words, in my experience, this process of becoming has entailed (at least) two aspects, a musical and a social one. It has been a process of becoming *musically*—by learning the music, and making it interact with my previous musical background—and a process of becoming *socially*—by learning and incorporating social codes and overcoming physical constraints

that may arise from social class, religion and cultural upbringing.[36] The concept of becoming has been theorised by several scholars in the humanities [see for example Biehl and Locke (2010) and Moehn (2012)] perhaps the most widely spread being the notion proposed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1983). According to them, the Being—as in 'the living being' or 'the world'—is an open-ended reality that 'is always in the process of becoming, developing, coming into being or advancing, and inscribing itself within a temporal dimension that is irreducible and nonclosed' (95). This notion is helpful as it emphasises a temporal, undetermined understanding of life as a continuous and multiple happening. This temporally open logic of becoming means that it does not end in the 'Being' of a cueca practitioner, but is instead a non-conclusive process of multiple learnings (musical and social highlighted here) that operates through the addition of experiences—layers and intensities [see also Deleuze (1995) and (2001)].

This process of becoming a cueca practitioner has inevitably been entrenched within the process of becoming a researcher, which has meant to enter in a dialogue with academic institutionalism—codes, language, styles, rules—that has shaped my learning dispositions. This has made me think about the schools of thought that have nurtured me throughout my professional and academic path, and how I have historically followed a learning path that has always been framed within a similar logic. Even when learning the music, and although I have never undertaken formal training in music, I have experienced the need to categorise and classify certain musical forms following structures and modes of understanding that do not necessarily apply to this kind of music (the cueca). This is one example of the sorts of limitations and deformations that social and cultural upbringing poses into our learning dispositions.

The process of becoming can also be understood as a movement between the outsider and the insider position. Both as a researcher and as a musician, I have gone through learning processes that have allowed me to increasingly situate myself as a participant within the field of the cueca revival in Chile. Social learning processes have meant that I have been moved from my original background of an accommodated social class, and under a Western logic, towards a more thorough understanding of the meanings of Chileanness, or the Chilean people—*el pueblo chileno*. Thus, I have approached and understood this new environment not only through my sociocultural perspective but also

[36] I do not mean to say that 'the music' and 'the social' are two completely separate realms; as will be sustained below, I rather understand them as intimately related. However, for the purposes of description it is helpful to think of these two dimensions of becoming.

incorporating the experience of sharing through friendship, working companionship and music learning, with people who come from other social and cultural backgrounds, of course always form the experience of being a native Chilean. The fact that I am Chilean allows me to see my research field as my home, as something that does not entail *otherness* but rather belonging. I have had to overcome certain social constraints that come both from within myself—the values and dispositions that come from my upbringing—and from the environment. Thus, mutual social prejudices have been mostly dissolved in order to focus on the Chileanness that I share with such environment.

Moreover, musical learning processes have further helped me by situating me in the 'subordinated' position of the apprentice. I have had to overcome my own previous 'literacy-oriented' musical disposition (despite not having trained formally in music) to dive into the oral musical language of the cueca, which has been quite tricky for my brain to absorb. But as the years have passed by, I can say I have *bodily* understood certain musical aspects that have allowed me to possess at least some knowledge to share with the cueca community. As we will see, this bodily understanding of the music—especially the rhythms—cannot be separated from the linguistic decoding of my masters' language, which has only been possible through my own immersion within their social environment in roles that were different from that of the researcher: as an apprentice, as a friend, and as a working partner.

Reflexivity seems like the adequate method to review all of these mental, bodily, intimate and social processes that have shaped my learning throughout these years.

## REFLEXIVITY AND AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Before introducing myself into the field of ethnomusicology, I was trained in sociology in Chile, in a school that, although increasingly involved in topics of the arts and the humanities, was primarily focused on quantitative data research. The curriculum was roughly based on three main pillars: a theoretical one, a historical one, and a methodological one. I highly enjoyed the first two, while I must acknowledge I had more than one struggle with the methodological one; of all the modules it had, only one involved qualitative methods, which was the one that made the most sense to me as per my research interests.[37] The faculty had some great teachers whose approach to

[37] By that time I already thought of myself as an amateur musician and a visual artist—in fact I was studying Fine Arts as a parallel degree in the same university—and the topics that interested me the most were those of 'cultural' nature.

theoretical issues compelled me genuinely; however, I believe they did not offer us the thorough and diverse range of methodological tools some of us needed to be able to actually engage in research on those particular issues. In my personal experience, we had either an almost socially-detached, philosophically-oriented approach to topics on culture and society or a data-based approach to such matters, having to engage in statistical analysis in order to understand them. I must say this still reflects the reality of sociologists in Chile today, where most job offers are related to quantitative research on fields such as market studies or public policy.

I then worked for a couple of years in the Chilean Ministry of Culture and did much field research on rural and folk traditions, particularly of the sixth region, where I came closer to the world of the cueca. Searching for better tools to engage with research on culture, some years later, I came to London to pursue a Master's degree in Cultural Studies. I thoroughly enjoyed the course, and I know now that I learned a great deal. However, I was still anxious about the detached status of my research approach. So far, all the most relevant products of my research (theses, papers) had related to either fine arts or music, which pleased me, yet I was still worried that my writing would remain dusted in the back corner of a library. 'Who cares about this?' was—and still is sometimes—the question I continuously asked myself even after obtaining successful outcomes from my work.

I felt the need for a change of approach, and that is why I later chose ethnomusicology as a discipline that would allow me to focus on music straight away and give me new methodological perspectives to undertake research. The most significant challenge I faced when writing was that of 'finding my own voice.' I was used to writing in the third person, or, when the use of the first person was unavoidable, it would always be plural—as if *we* constituted a sort of omniscient and respectable authorial presence, concealing any remnants of my actual, embodied self. I understand now that even for me—more for my supervisor—this approach made it all the more difficult to decipher the real (personal) thoughts I was trying to convey. I have to say that only now, after having discovered the method of autoethnography, I feel that I have found a tool that almost perfectly suits my research needs while it moderates my anxieties. I also know now that many researchers have shared those anxieties in both the social sciences and the humanities.

According to Carolyn Ellis (2015), during the 1970s and 1980s a 'crisis of representation' took place through several disciplines in social sciences and humanities

due to the separation between the researchers' 'selves' and the 'research experience,' which generated a whole movement aiming to rethink 'the form and purpose of sociocultural investigation and description' (9). The term auto-ethnography, for instance, was first coined in 1975 by Karl Heider, and he was followed by several scholars who were concerned with ideas of 'self-ethnography,' 'personal narrative, subjectivity, and reflexivity' during the 1980s (16). The methodological approach gained adherents throughout the 1990s and 2000s, and now after decades of reflexive work, it can be said that 'Qualitative research (or any research) can no longer maintain a distanced, so-called objective, self-serving stance' (18). Instead, autoethnography has offered us a path through which we can integrate personal identities and experiences into the more theoretical scrutiny of any given social and cultural phenomenon, bringing to the forefront how 'social identities influence the research process, particularly in terms of what, who, and how we study; what and how we interpret what we observe and experience; and how we represent our observations and experiences of cultural life' (19). Moreover, by combining theory and personal narratives, autoethnography has offered us a means for 'putting theory into action; autoethnographic texts can thus pose a challenge to entrenched beliefs, practices, and ways of understanding experience' (90). I believe autoethnography, and reflexive writing more in general, responds to my research needs precisely because of its capacity of making academic work meaningful in real life. As stated above, I have always worried about who will read my work and whether my work might prove itself useful to anyone.

Furthermore, being funded by the government of Chile (a country still characterised by high levels of poverty and social injustice), I want to be responsible for that benefit and make my work meaningful, contributing something positive to society. In this sense, acknowledging that reflexivity aims to connect academic scholarly writing with situated reality has compelled me to dive deeper into this method. The merging of research and real life has been a tonic throughout these four years of my PhD, and it has been building up at least since I started my higher education in 2004. It is as if life and the field have practically been the same thing for me through all these years.

Kim Etherington (2004) also relates reflexive research methods to a way of doing research that had been previously ignored as it was a mode of operating that belonged to a different paradigm, namely that of minorities that were mostly excluded from academic discourse and language:

> During the 1970s and 1980s women's voices became louder, both in society and in research as the Women's Movement challenged the dominant discourses of patriarchy, recognizing that women's views of women's lives needed to be placed alongside the views of men. And often women's ways of knowing and relating were different from those of many men (Alcoff and Potter 1993). Researchers began to address power issues, not just in relation to women's issues, but also issues of concern to other oppressed minority groups, espousing greater equality and transparency that required different ways of collecting data and representing it. (26)

The act of including oneself into the object of research, 'deconstructing dominant discourses and taken-for-granted assumptions about the world,' and including others' stories as equally essential sources has, according to Etherington, allowed researchers to take part in a '"narrative turn" in the world' (27) that has ultimately enabled them (us) 'to create meaning out of experience' (28). Such experiences may be personal, shared, or belonging to others, thus transforming the research process into a collaborative one in which we all become sources of knowledge. I must admit that I have not directly engaged with the personal aspects of my own gendered experience as a musician and as a researcher in this thesis. This is not to say that it is not a priority for me; on the contrary, it is quite essential, and I present some of the gender issues I feel most passionately about in chapter 6. However, in all honesty, I have to say that my political stand in terms of gender, music, and research, is only taking more concrete shape in the present, and there is still ample room for it to mature. Time will allow me to reflect and to understand the implications that being a woman have entailed for my research process, including all the relations I have established through fieldwork as well as my experience as a student in London. To put it simply, my class position in fieldwork in Chile and my condition of being a South American international student in London have been more visible for me than my status of being a woman, thus generating more direct reflections. The reason for this might lie on the same anxieties—of social and academic nature—that I have pointed out above and will continue to explain through this chapter. Ellen Koskoff (1987, 2014) is highly inspiring in this regard, and she offers a clear path for me to continue to explore these matters through reflexivity in the future. Her work represents an exceptional case of detecting gender biases within the field of music studies, thus contributing to raising the voices of the underrepresented perspectives and languages of women. Her research has of course been complemented by the consideration of the personal journey that her 'rising political consciousness' has entailed (2014, 3), which situates her efforts along those of reflexive researchers as well.

Autoethnographic methods have also contributed to dissolving historical hierarchic distinctions between researcher and consultants by situating all of them and the relations they establish in the same position, as (informative) participants of the research

experience. And this makes me think of the importance that friendship and working companionship have had throughout these years of research on cueca. As Brydie-Leigh Bartleet (2009) explains,

> Relationships are at the heart of what autoethnographers and musicians do. They unlock and reveal the complexities of our work. By openly talking about them, we present our experiences in a way that others can relate to, learn from, and maybe challenge (see Bartleet and Ellis 2009). (729)

The process of becoming that this whole research has entailed for me is therefore constituted by several simultaneous developments I have undergone. Becoming a researcher has meant for me to struggle internally with my own ethical and social anxieties, involving the acceptance of where I come from and the definition of where I want to go. In this sense, the research process has granted me a route for establishing my own path towards challenging the status quo. Furthermore, it has put me in contact with musicians and practitioners that have become real friends, and with whom I have been able to further destabilise the social boundaries I had always been so self-conscious of. Becoming a musician, on the other hand, has imprinted this research process with a profoundly embodied experience, raising many of the issues of class, gender, political power, and nationalism that I discuss throughout this thesis. My journey as a musician has, to some extent, made these issues more tangible. And this is precisely what makes the combination of music and autoethnography so fruitful:

> Just as the work of a musician is inherently corporeal, an autoethnographer also draws on and works from embodied knowledge and experiences. This focus frees the voice and body from the conventional and restrictive mind-body split that continues to pervade traditional academic writing. (Bartleet and Ellis, Music Autoethnographies. Making Autoethnography Sing / Making Music Personal 2009, 10)

I conclude this section with a piece taken from my personal notes, which reflects both the importance and the adequacy of following the path of reflexivity to present the outcomes of these years of doing research, doing music, a process of becoming socially and musically a Chilean-cueca practitioner:

> I believe art has the faculty of socially dis-classifying me. I don't know why. I love music, doing it, interpreting it, studying it, listening to it, dancing to it. Music is a universal topic/reality. It has allowed me to get into worlds otherwise I wouldn't have had access to. And that is hugely compelling. It somehow gives me freedom. I have found in the cueca, in folklore, a tool to give meaning to my own professional practice. It just makes me love what I do. (Personal notes, July 2018)

### ABOUT MYSELF: GROWING UP, SOCIAL AND MUSICAL BACKGROUNDS

I was born in 1985, in the middle of the military dictatorship which controlled Chile between 1973 and 1990, led by Augusto Pinochet Ugarte. I was born into a big, traditional, Catholic family, of a relatively accommodated economic status, and I am

fortunate to have grown up in a family environment of freedom, love and guaranteed safety. I am overly aware now that this was not the case for many Chileans who were born during the same years. The dictatorship period entailed a great deal of power abuse, which besides leaving permanent scars over Chilean society as a whole, affected tens of thousands of victims who had to go through the trauma of either harassment, prosecution, imprisonment, torture, exile and/or murder.

I was educated in a private all-girls Catholic school, with 120 pupils in each year, and although I made some of my dearest friends during those years, for extended periods I struggled with the feeling of not fitting in entirely. I believe this was due to several things: first, my parents were passionately devoted to the Catholic religion, which they practised in quite a traditionalist manner. This meant that I was brought up under several rules and values that were not shared with the majority of my classmates, most of whose parents may have been Catholic but less devout. Examples of this are that my parents attended mass every day, they made us pray the rosary every morning in the car on our way to school, and, most importantly, we were (still are) eight siblings. This implied that the house economy was restricted, as even when my father has gone through a successful engineering career, he could not escape the financial struggles of housing, feeding and educating eight children—especially in an increasingly capitalist society with weak state guarantees. My mother, on the other hand, did not work as a professional because she dedicated her life to raising us—undoubtedly a kind of *work* in any case. Thus, there was no other income in my household than that of my father's, and hence austerity was a predominant value throughout my school years, a value which contrasted vividly with my classmates, most of whom enjoyed luxurious lifestyles. The more profound consequence of this is that, in general terms, my interests, thoughts and passions were quite different from those of the world that surrounded me, and I struggled to find friends with whom to share those things that mattered to me.

I enrolled in Sociology BSc as soon as I graduated from high school, thinking that I would have access to a whole different social environment, and in a discipline that I thought would indulge my need for reflecting on social issues. My father was especially worried, as, according to him, this was a left-wing oriented career, and 'they would mess with my head.' He was partly right, as they did mess with my head more than a bit, but, what he did not know is that somewhat unconsciously, I had, long before that, already distanced my political inclinations from his. And this separation happened through the sphere of music. One of my older brothers was studying to be a composer and classical

guitarist, and I mostly blame him for the musical soundscapes of my adolescence. Thus classical heroes such as Johanne Sebastian Bach, Igor Stravinsky or Bela Bartok, and diverse popular music masters such as *Guns 'n Roses, Genesis*, *Rush*, *Queen*, *Sui Generis*, *Los Tres*, and most importantly, the *Nueva Canción Chilena*[38]—especially *Illapu* and *Inti Illimani*—all of whom I sort of automatically absorbed into my musical universe. In September 2003, I attended my first nueva canción concert with my best friend, who had bought my ticket as an early present for my 18th birthday, and I remember we had the time of our lives. The concert took place in the National Stadium on the 5th of September 2003, and the name of the show was *El Sueño Existe - Homenaje a Salvador Allende* ('The dream lives on - Homage to Salvador Allende'). Artists present on that occasion were Silvio Rodríguez, Pedro Aznar, *Los Bunkers*, Isabel and Tita Parra, Ángel Parra, etc. Although dictatorship was still a taboo for my friend and me during those years, this music thoroughly moved us and compelled us, and the lyrics appeared to us as containing a universal truth. There was a particular song—one of the first songs I learned to play in the guitar—called 'Samba Landó,' which I used to play every time someone asked me to sing something for them. One of the verses to this song went as follows:

*Table 2.1. Samba Landó*

| **Spanish Lyrics (Original)** | **English Translation** |
|---|---|
| La gente dice 'qué pena<br>que tenga la piel oscura'<br>La gente dice 'qué pena<br>que tenga la piel oscura'<br>como si fuera basura<br>que se arroja al pavimento<br>no saben que el descontento<br>entre mi raza madura. | People say 'what a shame<br>that she/he has dark skin'<br>People say 'what a shame<br>that she/he has dark skin'<br>as though it was rubbish<br>that is thrown to the pavement<br>they don't know that discontent<br>grows among my race. |

Without knowing the actual background for those words, I always felt they made so much sense, and that they represented my thoughts in such a liberating, blunt expression. I felt similarly about most of their lyrics, and which also made me move closer to exponents of the *Nueva Trova* such as Silvio Rodríguez or Pablo Milanés. In short, my sensitivity towards engaged song was extreme, and my first steps as a musician—learning to play the guitar and to sing on my own—were mostly guided by these gurus.

Once in graduate school, I found myself again struggling with the awkward feeling of not fitting in, this time because I came from a different social background than most of my classmates. Their political struggles and convictions all seemed new and

[38] See glossary for definition of the *nueva canción*.

somewhat radical to me, as I had grown up in the comforts of a highly depoliticised environment. From the very onset of my higher education, I witnessed how most of my classmates and friends participated in massive demonstrations demanding fair education conditions and to put a stop to the continuous increase of university fees. My struggles for justice, I thought, would advance through other lines of action, mostly related with artistic creation, and with becoming a professional who would engage in meaningful projects and jobs that would allow me to make a difference within the social worlds that surrounded me. I rejected direct political engagement; I did not vote for any Chilean elections until two years ago (2017). The main reason for this apolitical stand was that while I grew up reacting against the political thoughts of my social circle, the fears behind their extremely conservative right-wing advocacy somehow got to me. Also, post-dictatorship years meant that Chilean politics were polarised between being pro-Pinochet and pro-Allende, so however much I rejected their political discourses, I still could not find an alternative that I dared to embrace. Hence, I embraced the political song. The nueva canción repertoire completely represented my thoughts, and the musical quality made these songs attractive to me. It generally felt safe to channel my social-political anxieties through this repertoire.

## BECOMING A CUECA PRACTITIONER

### First approaches

As may have been revealed through these lines, my path to becoming a cueca practitioner did not start with the PhD, but some years earlier, when I got in contact with the Chilean rural world. Nevertheless, there are some relevant stories even before that, as I was drawn to folk music since my adolescence. The cueca dance steps I remember now I learned in 9$^{th}$ grade in gym lessons at school. I am sure I must have danced it horribly because every time I have tried it afterwards, people have laughed at me; however, I got the highest mark in the final evaluation—as most of my classmates did. In other words, it really did not matter much to the school that we learned the dance properly, or maybe they did not even know what a proper cueca dance involved. With such education, and growing up in the capital, very far from rural traditions, I never seriously danced the cueca again until recent years.

On the other hand, when I started to learn to play the guitar around the same years—which I have permanently practised until today—I began trying to play folk music, and I learned some Chilean and Latin American folk songs that I still keep in my repertoire. The first cueca I remember ever having played was ‘La Consentida,’ which I

played for independence-day celebrations in 8th grade at school. Around ten years later we went camping with some of my friends again for independence-day festivities, and I prepared three cuecas for the occasion, among many other songs, to entertain the party around the fire before we all went dancing in the *fondas*.[39] The cuecas I sang, I remember well, were 'El Guatón Loyola,' 'La Consentida,' and 'La Rosa con el Clavel,' which are among the most widely known cuecas in Chile.[40] I know I did a 6/8 guitar strumming that fitted the cueca songs, though I was permanently conscious that I was far from playing the correct cueca rhythm, which in any case did not matter too much as I was most probably the only one aware of that. A couple of years later, in 2012, when I was working for the Culture Ministry in Rancagua, I had to confront a completely different audience, as I was in an area of Chile that is famous for its people's extensive knowledge and practice of folk traditions. Once again, I was asked to play in a barbecue that was organised to celebrate the independence-day with our co-workers—most of whom were locals of the 6th region—and to my own embarrassment, without knowing it I played a tonada instead of a cueca. While the cueca structure obeys a choreographic pattern which defines its dynamics and repetitions, the tonada is not meant to be danced, and thus it has a much looser structure. A cueca dance typically lasts between 90 seconds and two minutes while the tonada can very commonly last four or five minutes. They share a similar rhythm and timbre, which is why it is easy to confuse them when one does not know much about them. And that was my case at that moment, which I unknowingly revealed in front of all my co-workers, who in turn very nicely and politely kept repeating and repeating the turns of the dance as my 'cueca'—'La Jardinera,' by Violeta Parra—seemed never to end.

Soon after that, I met the cantora, payadora, and dear friend, Daniela Sepúlveda (La Charawilla). She approached me as the person in charge of the cultural heritage regional division to see if there were any projects available for her to participate in, so we started working together creating traditional music and *popular* poetry workshops for public secondary schools in the region, which were funded by the regional Ministry of Culture. These workshops took place during two or three months of full days of work

[39] This is a traditional term to name the independence-day celebrations in Chile. See glossary for details.

[40] Just for fun, I did a small Facebook survey some months ago, asking my friends to name the first (or the first two) cuecas that came to their minds. I got 78 respondents who named 118 songs. They named a total of 40 different songs (mostly cuecas, though some of them were tonadas), with 'La Consentida' being named 38 times, followed by 'El Guatón Loyola,' mentioned 22 times, then 'Los Lagos de Chile,' 14 times, and 'La Rosa con el Clavel,' five times.

travelling around different sectors in the region to teach the workshops. In those trips, we talked and talked about the state of culture and traditions in Chile, the lack of funding, the difficulties for national artists to earn a livelihood, and so on. We got to know each other and soon became good friends, visiting each other's houses and sharing some unforgettable conversations. One day, I asked her to teach me how to sing, play, and write the cueca. I picked the cueca for no particular reason, though now I am tempted to think it was due to it being the most typical traditional music in Chile, which probably made me feel that I needed at least some basic notions of it to be a respectable researcher, cultural worker, or even musician. With these lessons, a whole new world opened itself to me. She taught me the poetic structure of the cueca, and the basic guitar strumming pattern, based on the cueca 'El Copihue Rojo,' a traditional cueca collected by Violeta Parra. She also taught me how to tune the guitar following the peasant cantora usage (the *guitarra traspuesta*), and I had lots of fun tuning and re-tuning my guitar, experimenting with different chords. With her, and other interviewees, I also learned how to build *décimas*,[41] as my research then advanced primarily focused on the tradition of *canto a lo poeta* (or *paya*).[42] Her partner then was Javier Peña (*El Quiltro*), and as we all became close friends, they would typically assess my guitar playing and my poetry construction when we got together for some drinks or dinner in their house, which they called 'La Granja de los Cantores' (or The Cantores' Farm).

With all such learning, I came to London in 2013, and was incredibly keen to develop my newly acquired skills and continued to practise on my own, mostly along the soundtracks of Violeta Parra and *Las Morenitas*, to whom I will refer later. In London, I joined a Chilean traditional dance group that was based there. I learned many songs and rhythms with them, as I was the musician who accompanied their dance presentations. I also played cuecas at pubs in London, in open mics or in 'paid' gigs (I never really got paid at that time). I started writing décimas for myself, as a means to express any particular feelings, and also to practise. I thus wrote about the Chilean dictatorship, my family, the meanings of journeys in life, the conflict between Israel and Palestine, the significance of being a cantora, etc. Below is a fragment of one of the décimas I wrote during this initial stage, which went roughly between 2013 and 2015:

[41] See glossary.
[42] See glossary.

*Table 2.2. Décima Quiltro y Charawillla*

| Spanish Lyrics (Original) | English Translation[43] |
|---|---|
| Y la décima aprendí | And the décima remained |
| con amigos muy queridos | with me from my dearest friends |
| a quienes yo nunca olvido | whom I will never forget |
| aunque estén lejos de aquí, | even when they're far away, |
| pues con ellos compartí | as we shared along the way |
| algo más que su buen vino. | a bit more than some good wine. |
| Desde entonces me empecino | And since then my best I try |
| en cantar la poesía. | to sing, write, and love the poetry, |
| Pa acordarme de esos días | so that their wonderful memory |
| no hay que andar tanto camino. | sticks forever in my mind. |

## Official Lessons: rhythm, the internal pulse of the cueca

There is one feature that has been traversing my learning experience throughout these years, and which I have learned through different developments and at different paces: the rhythm of the cueca. This story is organised around my process of apprehending the rhythm, rather than chronologically presenting each one of the lessons I had during fieldwork, the main reason being that rhythm has been crucial to this (ongoing) process of becoming, both musically *and* socially, a cueca practitioner. It has pointed out some technical limitations that not only have to do with my musical aptitudes, but also with the sociocultural dispositions that arise from my upbringing, which is one of the central points I want to make in this chapter.

Rhythm is the feature that has most obviously evidenced the difficulties I have confronted when learning to play the cueca. I learned it basically through the practice of two instruments: the guitar and the *pandero*.[44] In 2013 my friend Daniela (or Charawilla) taught me for the first time the basics of playing the guitar strumming of the cueca. She did so just showing me the basic pattern on her guitar, which I had to imitate. Though it may seem simple, I struggled enormously. I could not sing and play at the same time for a while, which was really annoying. The pattern she drew on my notebook was the following:

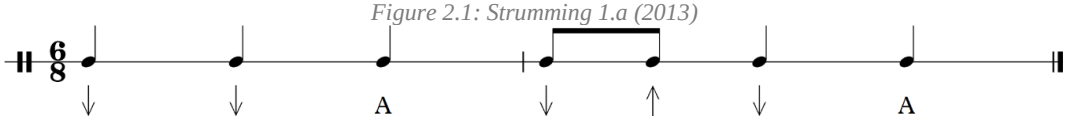
**↓ ↓ A ↓ ↑ ↓ A**

[43] This is not exactly a literal translation, but it mostly keeps the sense of the words. Slight modifications function in order to maintain the rhyme and metric, which are the most important constitutive features of the décima. I should however point out that I do not know if the same rules would apply in the English language. Rhyme and metrics here are based on the Spanish language accentuation rules—hence the slight metric variation in lines eight and nine. To put it simply, in the Spanish language, the number of syllables in an octosyllable verse will depend on the accentuation of the final word: if the stress is in the final syllable (*aguda*), we write seven syllables; if the stress is in the penultimate syllable (*grave*), we write eight syllables; if the stress is in the antepenultimate syllable (*esdrújula*), we write nine syllables; and so on.

[44] See glossary for description.

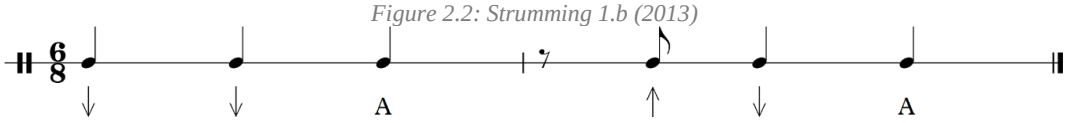
with **A** meaning *apagado* (or 'turned off'), which would refer in English to the stroke that mutes the strings in the guitar. What I understood was this:

*Figure 2.1: Strumming 1.a (2013)*



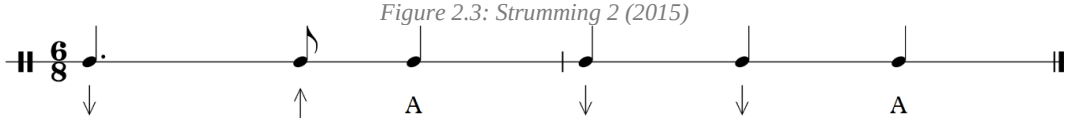

I practised on my own for some months, trying to imitate what I heard on my friends' recordings, especially following Javier's (or Quiltro's) strumming which I felt was the most 'authentic' due to his peasant background. Once in London, I started playing and singing, and I found a formula that helped me feel the pattern more naturally:

*Figure 2.2: Strumming 1.b (2013)*




I juggled with some more slight variations, practising on my own and starting to perform in gigs and accompanying the dance group in their presentations. I was sure that I was not strumming correctly, but I could still not figure out why, and I was far away from my 'masters' to lead me. So as the months went by, I continued to play cuecas and other Latin American genres, and thus, two years later, my strumming had suffered some deformations:

*Figure 2.3: Strumming 2 (2015)*




What annoyed me the most was that I could not get this sort of 'swung' feeling to my cueca sound, as I was always playing it in a very regular pace and I could not seem to avoid that. I went on fieldwork in 2016, and I undertook my first official lessons in cueca music. I took harp lessons with Diego Barrera, who has now become another of my very dear friends from my time working in Rancagua. I also started going to canto a la rueda[45] workshops given by Luis Castro González, where he aimed to teach us everything about this cueca style: its history, its repertoire, how to sing it and how to play the pandero. I decided to learn to play the harp mainly because a cuequero, who had watched me sing and play some months earlier as he was touring in London, explained to me that I

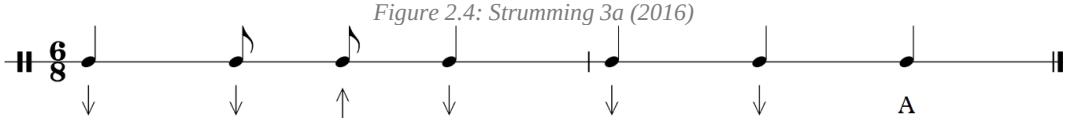
[45] See glossary for definition.

reminded him of the peasant cantora style, also suggesting that the harp could be a great companion for me in this learning journey. I took that very seriously and thought that taking harp lessons could also be an excellent space for me to learn some other things from the cueca and Chilean folklore in general during fieldwork.

I initially wanted to take harp lessons with either Isabel (Chabelita) Fuentes, founder and director of the prominent folk group Las Morenitas, or Diego, her apprentice. Our friendship had been building up throughout the years, via social networks and my visits. Chabelita lived 150 km away from Santiago, where I was staying with my family, and I rarely had any chance to travel because I was undertaking fieldwork along with my then 3-month baby boy, Manuel, so in the end, I decided to stay in Santiago and take the lessons with Diego. Diego Barrera was born in 1988 in San Vicente de Tagua Tagua, and since he was 11 years old, he started going to Chabelita's house after school every week. He started playing the accordion, under his father's influence, and soon he was asked to join 'Rigolemu,' the folk group that Chabelita directed during the 2000s, to cover for an accordionist that was unable to play on a given occasion. Ever since, he has uninterruptedly been visiting Chabelita—even when he moved to the capital to undertake his graduate studies in Law—for more than 15 years, to become the excellent harpist and musician that he is today. He gave me harp lessons for nearly three months; as my skills developed, so did our friendship, and what I would like to call a 'cultural management partnership.' We were supposed to do one-hour lessons, but it always turned out to be almost two hours as we kept on talking about subjects related to his life as a folklorist, and what was happening around Santiago's urban folk music scene. Every lesson was a mixture between playing the harp and talking about Chilean music and the musicians' realities. During one of these lessons, I stayed for a bit longer for an interview with one of Diego's colleagues, Dángelo Guerra. At a given moment, as we were discussing about YouTube instrument learners—which he disapproved for the lack of a master who could teach more than just the technical-musical aspects—I showed him my guitar strumming, telling him precisely that living in London I had not been able to get much guidance other than what I could find online. He told me 'you are doing it the other way around' (personal communication, 12th April 2016). It was not the first time someone said that to me, but I just could not understand what it meant, and as I had much more to ask him, we soon dropped the subject to talk about other things. At the end of another lesson, I asked Diego to show me the difference between the cueca and the tonada strumming. He started showing me different styles and ways to play each one of them, telling me: 'if you know

how to do the cueca strumming, you can do the tonada strumming.' Then I showed him my own playing style, which was something like this (I permanently kept changing my strumming as I never felt I played it rightly):

*Figure 2.4: Strumming 3a (2016)*




Me: … look at the one I play, but I think that, I have never felt as if this was OK, you know?

[I play]

Diego: no, that's not cueca

Me: and what is this? [as I keep playing]

Diego: I don't know but…

Me: would it work in a tonada? [as I continue playing]

Diego: it could work for a tonada … right, because you always have to stress beat 1 … you are not doing that

Me: [as I stop playing] I don't know what I do but, it was my imitation of…

Diego: let me see, can you repeat it? Repeat it please?

[I play]

Diego: You know why? Because you are stressing the *apagado* on beat 6 and it goes on beat 1.

Me: aaaaaah, so THAT was the mistake

Diego: so it changes everything

Me: aaaaah cool!!

Diego: The *apagado* is on beat 1… on beats 1 and 4

(Harp lessons, 28th April 2016)

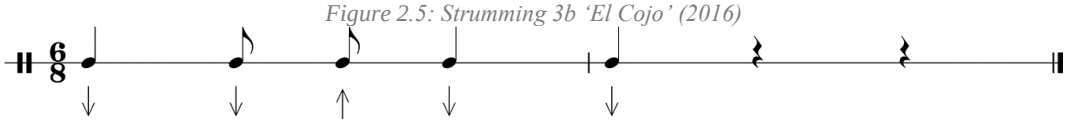
On that moment, he also clarified something for me that I had not understood before. He told me that when they played the strumming, they started from beat 5: 'you know it starts on beats 5 and 6 (…) so what you have to do is to make sure the stress is obviously on beat 1. And that is the tricky part; that is the difficulty of the strumming.' I had got it all wrong from the start, when Daniela taught me her strumming, which I thought started on beat 1 (Fig. 2.1) when it actually started on beat 5. It felt like an epiphany, though I could not yet fully bodily understand it because I did not have enough time to practise on the guitar as I was more focused on learning the harp at that time. As some people have told me with regards to music learning, 'the body has its own memory.' This memory can be understood in the context of kinaesthetic learning as what Richard Bailey and Angela Pickard (2010) call a 'motor program,' which in their words is 'a mental representation, made up of rules, commands and plans that determine the production of a skill' (369). The performance of such (musical) skills would be the result of the corporeal

automatisation of any given movements or actions (like rhythmic patterns), which is achieved through training. And this is what I mean by bodily understanding.

I went back to London in May of that year, and soon after, I started searching for the guidance of other masters. One of them was Alejandro Reyes. I had met him sometime earlier in 2015, at a Festival that is held every two years in the town of Machynlleth, Wales, which honours the figure of Víctor Jara, and is called *El Sueño Existe* ('The Dream Lives On'). Alejandro was born in 1931, and he is one of the founding members of the—still active—historical Chilean folk ensemble *Cuncumén*. The band was founded in 1954 when a group of students got together at the Universidad de Chile's Folk Music summer school, led by the famous folklorist and researcher Margot Loyola Palacios (1918-2015). This group was relevant as it was one of the first groups dedicated to collecting traditional music from rural towns in Chile and bringing it to the stage. The group is also widely known because one of its members was Víctor Jara (1932-1973), one of the most significant and representative figures of the nueva canción chilena social and musical movement, which made him famous across Latin America and beyond. He joined Cuncumén in 1957 and became its artistic director in 1961. Víctor was a member of the communist party and was also very actively involved in acting. Through his art, he became a symbol of the *popular* political critique against the conservative elite, which ultimately led to his execution in 1973, as a political prisoner under Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship. Alejandro Reyes, like many other musicians of that time, had to flee the country under such a political context, settling in London in 1974. When he listened to us (our London-based Chilean music band, *La Veleidosa*) play at the festival in Wales, he approached us to tell us that our interpretation of Víctor Jara and Violeta Parra had made a good impression to him, and that he hoped we might get together some time to share insights about the music. This was incredibly exciting for us, and we (Ignacio—a friend and fellow musician—and myself, along with our families) started visited him from time to time, and in those visits, I always took my guitar with me and asked him for some tips. Once back from the field in 2016, I officially asked him to teach me some '*toquíos*'—a Chilean peasant term that comes from the word *tocar*, or to play (the guitar)—and to guide me on my guitar playing, so I started going to play the guitar at his house. In one of those occasions, he revealed another rhythmic gesture, which the very Margot Loyola had taught him: *el cojo*. The word 'cojo' refers to someone who limps, being unable to walk at a fluent pace, as for some reason one of their legs does not respond appropriately.

The metaphor refers to the irregular rhythm of the steps, where one of the legs has to be sort of dragged, delaying the walking pace. In a score, 'el cojo' looks somewhat like this:

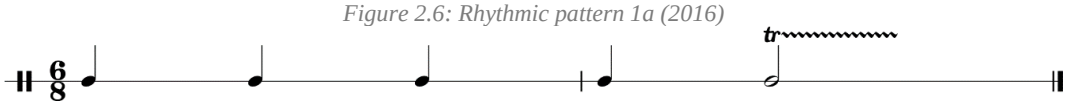
*Figure 2.5: Strumming 3b 'El Cojo' (2016)*



I tried to apply my new 'discoveries' to my strumming, and by the end of that year, I felt more comfortable but still feeling that something was not quite right. In December 2016, I went on the second stage of my fieldwork for around six weeks, and I booked lessons of pandero and urban-popular cueca singing with another master: Fernando Barrios, from *La Gallera* cueca group. I felt that if I learned the pandero, then I would much more thoroughly understand the cueca rhythm. And these lessons were indeed very enlightening.

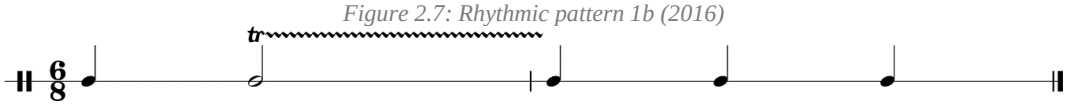
I had had my first approach to the pandero in my previous fieldwork trip a year earlier, as I took the canto a la rueda workshop with Luis Castro González. On that occasion, two of the lessons involved practising the pandero rhythm, so I had some basic knowledge on that. I had the same problem as before—which I now see so clearly: I did not know in which beat the rhythmic pattern actually started, so I struggled enormously to locate beat 1. The pattern he taught us, as I understood it then, was the following:

*Figure 2.6: Rhythmic pattern 1a (2016)*




But actually, what he meant was:

*Figure 2.7: Rhythmic pattern 1b (2016)*



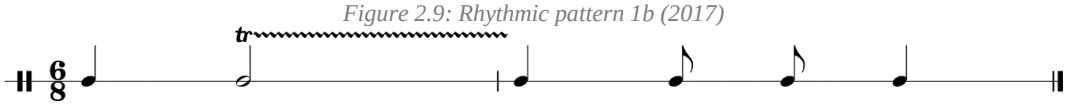

Subsequently, with Fernando, I struggled quite a lot until I finally understood what he used to call 'the internal pulse of the cueca.' The key to this internal pulse was that it should be organised around beats (or more accurately quavers) 2-3 and 5-6. Even when we should have been aware of beat 1, it should never play a prominent role. We first started clapping beats 2-3 and 5-6 as we sang a cueca. As simple as it might sound, it was challenging for me to sing in this way, as I had this stubborn tendency to displace the accents towards beat 1. And Fernando would tell us that stressing too much beat 1 would be to actually 'kill the cueca,' giving the examples of many drummers who played cuecas but who did not come from the world of the cueca, saying they would 'go to the ground,

while this is supposed to be floating.' In the final minutes of the first lesson, he gave us the basic pattern of the pandero, where the most important rule was to place the *rulo* or tremolo on beats 2-3, as follows:

*Figure 2.8: Rhythmic pattern 1a (2017)*


I practised diligently in the following weeks, though of course without yet being able to sing at the same time that I played the pandero, and on the next session I realised I had slightly altered the pattern:

*Figure 2.9: Rhythmic pattern 1b (2017)*




We discussed different rhythms and the hemiola phenomenon, and I was very anxious to understand everything 'properly,' as I had various misconceptions that I just needed to clarify right there. So we had sort of an awkward conversation (at least for me) when I was trying to ask Fernando to put proper names to the rhythms we were learning:

> Fernando: That's what we were talking about, that it's not like this [clapping] it's not squared, I can't put a metronome and play a cueca on top of it, and you can't sing over a cueca with a metronome (…) it is a sensation.
>
> Me: I don't know if my question is relevant here, but what I want to understand is if between beats 1 and 2, and between beats 2 and 3, there are different distances
>
> Fernando: that is too much, for me it's too much asking, and I don't know if it will do you any good. Right? Because it is a sensation, alright, we could quantify it, we could record it and deduce it…
>
> Me: …but in terms of sensation, I am not asking for the exact distance, but just if they are different, you see?
>
> Fernando: I don't know. I haven't studied it that way (…) what we are looking for here, because first, what we are doing is to dismantle, to deconstruct the rhythm, and a rhythm that is super irregular and super hard, but we do it in order to try to understand certain trickeries of the instrument, and of the music, so, one thing is the 6/8 that we use as a floor to understand where the thing is and where the thing goes... that's why I told you, if one commits too much with beat 1, the whole thing tends to one side… and the cueca is something else (…). Here, what we are trying to do is to understand beat 1 but almost to be able not to use it, you see?
>
> (Pandero lessons, 17th January 2017)

And after talking over this and practising some more, he would just jokingly tell me 'just stop counting darling.'

On the fifth session, I felt much more comfortable, both with the rhythm and with Fernando. I had practised quite a lot and had almost got the rhythm right this time. My only problem was that I had lots of trouble trying not to displace beat 1. When I heard the

recording of this lesson again, I was able to identify the dizziness of this lost downbeat, which I could not place correctly. My mistake was that I was putting too much emphasis on the *rulo* (the tremolo), and so, it soon felt like I was playing it on beats 1-2 instead of on beats 2-3, as it should be (Fig. 2.8). Throughout the 90 minutes of this lesson, I had an amazing evolution, and I can say that this was the day I finally got the rhythm right. On my fieldwork notes, I wrote:

> In this lesson I've noted myself as being more relaxed, I laughed at myself, and Fernando has been much nicer… It could be because I have practised, and he's realised I am taking this seriously, and that we have been able to progress better. (Personal notes, January 2017)

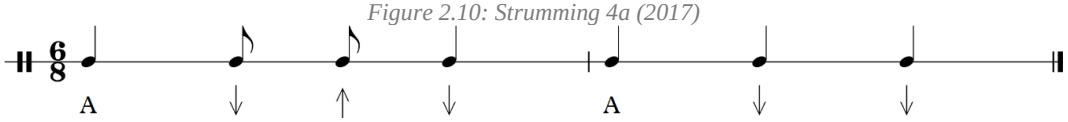
On the last session, it was only Fernando and me because I was about to return to London a few days later and we had to complete the number of sessions; thus we got together on a Saturday so that I wouldn't miss my last session, which was supposed to be on the following week. As it was only him and me, I asked him to teach me the rhythm on the guitar. Soon after we started, I realised I was strumming and singing upside down, and so I just told him that I would clap instead of playing the guitar. When clapping and singing I had to mark beats 2-3 and 5-6, which, to my surprise, I was now able to do. I know now that I had not yet incorporated the place of beat 1 in the cueca; I was baffled with what Fernando was teaching me, I was rhythmically 'crossed,' I did not quite understand his language, 'the 2-3,' 'the *bombo,*' 'the *bajo,*' I just could not decode all of that in real time, and contextualise the downbeat. However, on that lesson, I was able to sing cuecas on the right rhythm and with the right accentuations (when clapping), which was a significant step for me to continue learning on my own. I had all the material in my recorder—including a video of Fernando doing the cueca strumming—my mistakes and my evolution, so I was very pleased and satisfied with the workshop, and felt I was returning to London with new understandings that I now had to process not with my mind but with my mind and body together.

On May of that year (2017), I jointly organised a tour for Las Morenitas with my harp teacher, Diego Barrera. The tour was meant to celebrate Chabelita's career, which has spanned more than 70 years. Basically we had to gather the funds to bring a delegation of Las Morenitas to London, and to organise the concerts for them to perform. Diego was in charge of the first part, and I was in charge of the second one.[46] The tour took place

[46] They were able to do many fundraising concerts and activities in Chile, and get some help from governmental institutions; on my side, I received help from many institutions, including King's College London, the Latin American House, William Salinas from the pub Il Comandante, the Chilean House, the Chilean Embassy, and Dr Henry Stobart from the Latin American Music Seminar, all of whom provided

between the 18th and 29th of May 2017 in London. On one of the first days of the trip, Dángelo (Diego's colleague, and fellow singer in their folk band *Los Rastrojinos*) and Rafael (a friend of theirs who was in charge of the audio-visuals during the tour) came to my house to pick up Diego, who had initially stayed with us. We shared some tea, and they played some beautiful music, and just at that moment, I asked them to please correct my guitar strumming. This was the day when I finally got it. Diego explained to me the same we had talked about a year prior during harp lessons, and this time, it clicked. My body understood. I was able to correct it immediately, and since that day on, I have been able to play the cueca with the correct rhythm and accentuations. Of course, this does not mean that I am a master on the cueca rhythm, but at least I understand it, and I can play along with seasoned cueca musicians. Furthermore, I am no longer embarrassed about my strumming, which is now something like this:

*Figure 2.10: Strumming 4a (2017)*




And with certain variations:

*Figure 2.11: Strumming 4b (2017)*

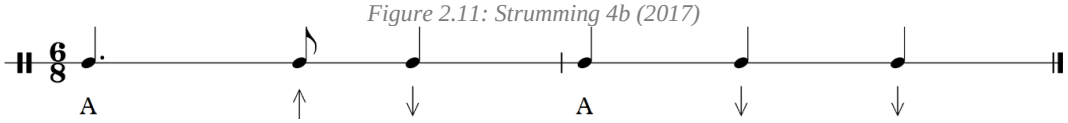
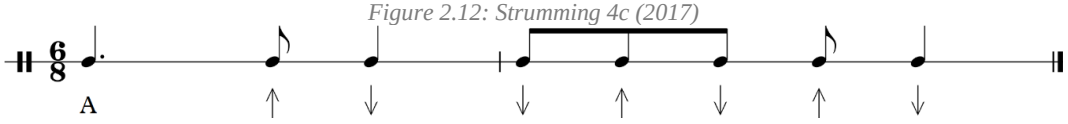



*Figure 2.12: Strumming 4c (2017)*




## DISCUSSION: LEARNING AS *BECOMING* BOTH MUSICALLY AND SOCIALLY

Alongside assimilating the rhythm of the cueca, throughout these years I have learned to play the harp, the pandero, the Venezuelan *cuatro*—a medium-sized four-string guitar which features a slightly deeper sounding board—I learned a vast repertoire of cuecas, tonadas and other Chilean and Latin American songs, I experimented with different approaches to singing—different vocal methods and attitudes—I learned to express myself through the music and the poetry of the cueca, I met many people related

space for Las Morenitas and their guest musicians to present their beautiful and original performances. I also received the extremely generous help of Jorge Morales and Carmen Soto, two Chilean-UK citizens who have lived in London for more than 40 years, and who offered a place to stay for the six persons who finally joined the tour: Chabelita Fuentes, Fany Flores and Emilia Ramírez, from Las Morenitas Cantoras, Diego Barrera and Dángelo Guerra from Los Rastrojinos Cuequeros, also from San Vicente de Tagua Tagua, and Rafael Alarcón, an audio-visual specialist they brought along to document the whole experience.

to the world of the cueca in Chile and became really close friends with some of them, and I learned from the history, the mythology, the theories, the languages, the social codes, the discourses, and the disputes that revolve around this musical practice. As Timothy Rice (1994) once said,

> Music learning is a social process as well as a cognitive and psychomotor one, a matter of social maintenance as much as of 'talent.' Who learns music and how they go about it is, in important ways, given to us by the world into which we are born. (42)

I began this chapter with an introduction to my own background. I have been extremely self-conscious about this where-I-come-from aspect throughout these four years while I have been trying to get into the world of Chilean cueca. I have been afraid of people not trusting me, not opening up to me, and not understanding me, because of this sort of privileged background that I hold, in the context of a country that is still socially and politically divided by the remnants of Pinochet's dictatorship. While it is true that the cueca is not political *per se*, in a way, it embodies the social and political history of the Chilean Republic. In this sense, its current social dynamics and contexts are still a reflection of recent socio-political developments. This is why the process of becoming that these four years of research have entailed also involves a critical social dimension. And this social dimension has to do with the social interactions I have held in the field and is shown on how these interactions have transformed my mental and physical approaches to the music of the cueca. This is why I believe this social dimension is tightly related to the bodily experience of the music. After all, and in accordance with Chris Schilling's *The Body and Social Theory* (1993),

> Our upbringing, for example, affects our bodies in a myriad of ways: our development as girls and boys who walk, talk, look, argue, fight and urinate differently all depends on the patterns of body training we receive from our parents and others (Haug, 1987). (12)

And I believe that this relationship between upbringing and body also becomes evident in how we experience music. In my case, it has to do with the fact that at the same time that I have been learning theoretically about the urban-*popular* cueca scene and its recent developments, I have been learning *performatively* about the rhythm and the musical features of the genre and style. And these processes cannot be separated. They produce each other as much as they reflect each other. My process of learning, of becoming, has thus taken place simultaneously in my mind and body.

Simon Frith (1996) already discussed the relationship between rhythm and the body in his book *Performing Rites*. He challenged the simplistic (though wide-spread) idea that African-derived music is more closely related with rhythmic development and

the body while European-derived music had more to do with melodic complexity and the mind, stating that this idea was actually based on an ideological and not a musical distinction. As Frith noted, 'The cultural ideology produces the way of hearing the music, in short; it is not the music which gives rise to the ideology' (127). Moreover, he rejects the presupposition of a mind/body split, as 'All music-making is about the mind-in-the-body' (128); instead, he acknowledges different modes of music-making: one more centred on performance (improvisation) and the other more centred on composition. However, these modes of music-making should not necessarily be adjudicated to any given ethnical background more than to any other one. That adjudication is what he understands as 'ideological and not musicological' (132).

Regarding my own experience, rhythm has been the major musical challenge I have confronted throughout these years, and I relate it to my experience of class. I do not mean that lower classes are more rhythmical than higher classes in Chile or Latin America; however, rhythm is differently learned and experienced in different social contexts. Thus, I have had to go through a process of performatively understanding the rhythm, and this process has been inseparable from my process of social adaptation. The idea of the relationship between music and social class has haunted me ever since I started to study the cueca, and it made so much sense once I discussed it with one of my consultants, the ethnomusicologist Rodrigo Torres, who added the word 'body' to the equation:

> Me: …that has caught my attention deeply; that to understand the cueca, one has to understand certain social barriers.
>
> Rodrigo: Certainly, I think it is important to have them in mind, and they have to do with the bodies, how they are disciplined and built. There is a cueca that had to be cross-cutting and such omnipresence has to do with the mode in which [the bodies] are disciplined, whether it felt right or wrong, there were some bodies that were more open to excesses or other forms of relationship where, sexuality, proximities, that sort of North American moral did not exist. And that microclimate is the one that interests me.
>
> (Personal communication, 25th January 2017)[47]

The social aspect of becoming an apprentice of cueca has been multi-dimensional, and although I most evidently experienced it through the learning of the rhythm, there are several other spheres of the cueca where I have undergone a similar evolution. For instance, the process of creation (both poetry and music composition), or that of the search for my own (singing) voice. Of the former process, I can share an example comparing one of the first cuecas I wrote, during the canto a la rueda workshop with Luis Castro

[47] For a more developed account of these thoughts see Torres's article *El Arte de Cuequear* (2003, 151).

González (May 2016), with one I wrote for the occasion of Las Morenitas's tour in London.

In one of the first sessions of the canto a la rueda workshop, the moderators gave us the assignment of writing a cueca about the district (town) of Quilicura, where the workshops took place. At the end of all the workshops—which were taking place in several municipalities in Santiago—they would gather all of the cuecas written by the participants and include them in a book that was to be published as a final product of the workshops. I wrote the following cueca:

*Table 2.3. Historia de Quilicura*

| **Spanish Lyrics (Original)** | **English Translation** |
|---|---|
| Antiguo pueblo rural<br>de importante agricultura,<br>es hoy la comuna actual,<br>comuna de Quilicura.<br><br>Su nombre del mapuche<br>'tres piedras' dice;<br>pueblo que la antecede<br>y la bendice.<br><br>Y la bendice ay sí<br>esta es su historia.<br>Que nos quede grabada<br>en la memoria.<br><br>Cierto que hay gran cultura<br>en Quilicura. | Old rural town<br>of important agriculture,<br>is today the current district,<br>district of Quilicura.<br><br>Its name from the Mapuche<br>'three stones' it means;<br>a culture that precedes it<br>and blesses it.<br><br>And blesses it, oh yes,<br>this is its story.<br>May it stay imprinted<br>in our memory.<br><br>True, there is great culture<br>in Quilicura. |

Shortly after that, in another session of the workshop, we went through all the cuecas we had written, and the moderators would comment and make suggestions to all of us. Here is what I wrote in my fieldwork notes after this:

> We had to write a cueca about the district of Quilicura (as the workshop took place there). Something special was that everybody was from that district, they knew its history, and they sort of participated in the town's traditions. So they knew legends, characters, anecdotes. I didn't. I wrote a cueca as if it was taken from Wikipedia. And even when my cueca was well constructed metrically, it had no substance. My fellow participants' cuecas were funny, they had brilliant ideas, or some of them very touching, they reflected the love for the land, the deepness. The mischief. I don't have that. Evidently, I've never lived in this district, and I barely know it. They did make metric mistakes. But their cuecas were honest. Mine wasn't; it was encyclopaedic… I realised that there is still much left for me to live in order to learn how to make a good cueca. The cueca must be made out of what one lives. It is not empty poetry, but it has to have substance, authenticity, personality… I don't know how to say it… I was so worried about the correct metric (…) [but] the richness is oral, as [Luis] says, not written… it is not just the metrical perfection, but the 'seasoning,' the flavour of the cueca… that's what I have to learn. (Personal notes, April 2016).

A year later, I was preparing for Las Morenitas's tour, and I wrote a cueca for them. Las Morenitas's visit was an extremely warm and friendly collaborative experience, where everyone involved, both in Chile and in the UK, participated with such

love for the cause of celebrating Chabelita's trajectory and ultimately for the music. It all flowed incredibly smoothly, even under the financial constrictions that a project like this obviously entailed. After all, undertaking the organisation of an experience that aimed to be the coronation of the over-70-year artistic career of Chabelita Fuentes, has been a remarkable opportunity for all of us. Two days before they arrived, while I was supposed to be working on my thesis, the emotion of the trip was such that I got inspired and wrote a cueca for the occasion. I had written a couple of cuecas before, but this one took me about five minutes to write, and it immediately felt just right. It goes as follows:

*Table 2.4. Viene de Chile llegando*

| **Spanish Lyrics (Original)** | **English Translation** |
|---|---|
| Viene de Chile llegando<br>la gran Chabelita Fuentes<br>con su buen lote cantando<br>la belleza'e San Vicente<br><br>También un Santiaguino<br>Dángelo Guerra<br>con Diego el Rastrojino<br>y en Inglaterra<br><br>Y en Inglaterra, ay sí<br>sigue la farra<br>La Fani en el tormento<br>Mily en guitarra<br><br>Y el Rafa que los graba<br>y esto no acaba | Arriving from Chile is<br>the great Chabelita Fuentes<br>with her good lot singing<br>the beauties of San Vicente<br><br>Also a Santiaguino [from Santiago]<br>Dángelo Guerra<br>with Diego, the Rastrojino [from Rastrojos]<br>Oh, in England<br><br>Oh, in England, oh yes<br>the feast goes on<br>Fani on the tormento [musical instrument]<br>Mily on the guitar<br><br>And Rafa who films them<br>and this does not end |

My inspiration was not yet satisfied at this point, so I decided to put music to it and then recorded it to be able to send it before they travelled. And so I did, I recorded it in four separate tracks, the guitar, the harp, the lead voice and the vocals. The creative process went smoothly, and in less than a couple of hours, I had already sent them the cueca via WhatsApp. Diego told me I made them all cry, as it was the first of many welcoming gestures in this exciting but challenging adventure they were about to get on, and it was not only in their Spanish language but in their own musical language as well. I was also very proud because they found it beautiful. I think this marked the beginning of an endearing encounter, as the making and sharing of the song, without me knowing it or rationally intending it, meant a much deeper engagement on my side, than just being the organiser of their tour. And this now reveals the level of personal involvement I had with this tour and with these people, who were gradually becoming very dear friends.

Regarding my vocal exploration, the story is a bit different, as I have a longer trajectory as a singer, and I think my confidence about my own vocal style has been much

stronger than with any other musical aspect in the cueca. However, singing the cueca is once again a different thing. Once more, we are talking about a practice that has to reflect the materiality of the body. It is not acting or interpreting, but rather performing. And in each new cueca I sang, I further *became* a singer of cueca. Cuequeros usually refer to the voice as the *pito* (whistle), which needs to be intense and somewhat fierce. They must be able to accompany themselves with percussion (sustaining the rhythm), and they need to be able to *segundear* (singing the backing vocals throughout the whole cueca) (Torres 2003, 155). Those are the basic requirements of this singing style. When I did the pandero and singing workshops with Fernando from *La Gallera* (in January 2017), he always talked about letting out our 'crude' voice, which is something I had much trouble with, because that was a voice I could not control very much. The times when he said I did it correctly, were the times I felt the most out of tune; at the same time, it felt sort of liberating to sing in that way, but I have not yet found enough occasions to practise it. I can distinguish what they are talking about, however, and I believe it has to do with the concept of the grain of the voice, which Rodrigo Torres often cites from Roland Barthes (1977): 'The "grain" is the body in the voice as it sings, the hand as it writes, the limb as it performs" (188).

*Figure 2.13. Las Morenitas on tour (London, 2017)*[48]

*Source: Fieldwork photos and documents, 2017*

[48] From left to right: My husband José, my son Manuel, myself, Paulina Reyes, Alejandro Reyes, Chabelita Fuentes, Diego Barrera, Fani Flores, Mily Ramírez and Dángelo Guerra (21st May 2017).

## CONCLUSIONS

This chapter aims to analyse my own learning processes as they unfolded throughout the four years of research for this thesis. I focused on describing the vicissitudes of the learning of technical aspects of the cueca such as rhythm, vocal style, and poetry, understanding that such learning cannot be separated from the multiple social interactions that have been at play during this process. Performance has been a critical aspect to such a learning process, which has made me understand it as a process of becoming, both musically and socially, a cueca practitioner. The locus of this becoming has been my own self—very importantly, including my own body.

I recently discovered reflexivity as a method that has allowed me to articulate a story that focuses on how my own experience of the research reflects on my personal transformations, thus acknowledging my role in the research field. The discovery of this method was a moment of epiphany as it helped me to make more sense of my own activity as a researcher. Aside from taking into consideration 'softer data' such as the subjective experience of research and interpersonal relationships, I believe reflexivity has the potentiality of making theory based on personal experience, socially meaningful. By telling this story, I hope to shed some light over topics that at least for me have been difficult to problematize in the context of my research, such as my personal experience of social class as a researcher, which has been present for me throughout the whole research process.

The experience of learning rhythms has been particularly informative of the mutual implication of physical, cognitive and sociocultural predispositions. I would have needed to share more time with the multiple 'masters' I had in order to better understand the hidden conventions of their modes of teaching, which did not necessarily follow the logic of notation. The difficulty I had in finding the downbeat in the guitar strumming evidences this, and it had to do with being far away and not being able to play among other practitioners. The 'swing' of the cueca, as some people call it, is based, among other things, on its emphasis on beats 2-3 and 5-6. When people clap along to a cueca, they emphasise these beats.[49] To grasp this with my body, with my actual hands, I had to learn to decode the language in which I have been taught and go over and over it until I finally

[49] Or at least that is how it should be done. Nowadays people are not as acquainted with cueca as they used to be 60 years ago, so they frequently clap wherever they feel driven to do so. Cuequeros and people related to the world of cueca always complain about this.

understood what was being said to me. And such learning would not have happened had I not got *inside* the field, both as an apprentice and as a friend, understanding also the cultural and social protocols.

Something similar happened with learning how to write a good cueca. Starting from a detached approach, trying to comply with the metrical and rhyming stipulations of the cueca poetic structure, my first results felt somehow immature and basic, making me realise that there was much more to the language of cueca than the poetic structure. In order to understand this language, I had to dive both into the social world of the cueca and into my own internal worlds, which meant, ironically, to come to terms with that where-I-come-from. That was the substance where I could take my own experience of Chileanness—and I do not mean this in a nationalistic way, but more in relation to the cultural aspects I share with the worlds I have been studying. The result is that I have been able to find in myself this sincerity that I saw in the cuecas of other practitioners, and which I initially felt was so hard to attain. It is precisely the embodiment of the narrative, the materialisation of one's own life in the words of the cueca, which makes it poetically rich.

And this embodiment also obeys the logic of Barthes's 'grain of the voice.' I have dedicated less time to vocal exploration. Although I have performed as a singer quite often during the past decade, and especially during the four years of PhD research, I have not committed myself as ardently to learning the vocal style; deep inside I felt that I already have some of the answers, which will unfold with time as I keep experimenting. This will definitely be a route for further research, especially now that I have encountered reflexive research methods to assess vocal exploration. I did understand, however, that there is a particular way to approach the urban-popular cueca singing, and that going this way entails the performative work of removing some degrees of stage fright, exploring the limits of one's own voice, and being able to go beyond the comfort of what one is accustomed to hearing. It also involves finding a personal way of embodying the style, in a way that will not result in a simple imitation.

Learning the cueca has been one of the most challenging and exciting journeys I have undertaken, and I am sure it will forever change how I decide to perform, do research, and even conduct my life. It is a process of becoming that has no fixed target or finishing line, and that is what makes it all the more appealing as a path in life.

# CHAPTER 3: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CHILEAN CUECA. FROM *MÚSICA FOLKLÓRICA* TO *MÚSICA POPULAR*

## INTRODUCTION

The first two chapters of this thesis aimed to present both my theoretical and methodological approaches to studying the recent developments of urban-popular cueca in Chile while offering a detailed overview of my positionality within the field. In the two chapters that follow (chapters 3 and 4), I will address the social and stylistic history of the cueca. I build these histories considering, firstly, the social and political developments that have outlined the current relationships of domination and resistance around the genre, and secondly, how such relationships have unfolded in the context of the music industry of the twentieth century in Chile.

Around 1830-31 the first opera season was inaugurated in Santiago de Chile with Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* (1816). The uniqueness of this occasion was not only due to the genre's novelty in the city but also because this version of the opera included a scene in which a very different sort of music was performed. This was the time when the three Pinilla sisters, Tránsito, Tadea and Carmen, known as *Las Petorquinas*—from the town of Petorca—went on stage to perform a few cuecas. This event constituted a milestone in the process of integration of cueca into the cultural life of Chilean society, as the three singers provoked, in the words of José Zapiola (1974 [1872]), 'a greater revolution than the one caused in Italy by the erudite who emigrated from Constantinople in the fifteenth century' (32). Ever since, the musical tradition of the cueca has oscillated between such a wide acceptance among highbrow circles—having reached a valued place in the theatre circuits of that time—and an equally profound social rejection, up to the point of having been forbidden legally several times in history.

This chapter aims to engage with the sociohistorical development of the cueca, which constitutes a history of both margins and institutionalism, to better understand the current state of the genre since 1990, when its revival process emerged. I put a particular focus on the conceptualisation of critical terms such as *lo popular*, *el pueblo,* and *música popular* (as different from popular music) on the one hand, and the nationalistic use of

folklore[50] and *música folklórica*,[51] on the other, while also looking at rural and urban styles of cueca, and their corresponding archetypes *huaso* and *roto*. I address some of these terms as they have been applied over the genre throughout its history, considering the specific meanings these classifications hold in Anglophone and Hispano-phone contexts.[52] In particular, I analyse the concept of folklore as a device for state control. I also show how the shifts that have taken place throughout the urban-popular cueca revival have precisely contributed to a process by which it has come apart from the category of folklore (and the national) and closer to *lo popular*, and *música popular* (as has also been suggested by Torres 2003 and Spencer 2011a, among others). I call such a process, one of *de-folklorisation*.[53] As we will see in detail, *música popular* is defined here mainly in relation to three concepts: (1) a manifest relation to a particular social group, *el pueblo*, associated with a working-class belonging and/or identification; (2) similarly, an association—either by imitation or differentiation, or both—with local traditions and *música folklórica*; and (3) a process of openness that allows for innovative practices of fusion and quotation within the genre. I have found this latter process of aesthetic innovation to be in turn characterised by four developments: (3.1) musical experimentation; (3.2) visual and performative changes; (3.3) reference to new contemporary discourses; and (3.4) changes in the mechanisms of knowledge transmission.

In the following section, I will discuss some terminological issues to provide a clear conceptual framework that will facilitate my discussion of the process of de-folklorisation.

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[50] While the term folklore is most commonly—both in the English and the Spanish language—associated with traditional cultural expressions shared within a community through oral tradition, throughout this thesis I also often use it in reference to the transformation of these local traditional practices and expressions into national symbols (i.e. folklorisation). In such a context, *música folklórica* would be understood as the artistic projection of these local cultural expressions to diverse ends: pedagogical, institutional, political, entertainment-related, etc., and folklorisation would be the particular process through which the meanings of folklore change into national symbols (see discussion below).

[51] Also see glossary.

[52] See glossary for all definitions. It is important for me to make this point as I am a native Spanish speaker and I am Chilean, which means that my understanding of the labels of popular music and *música popular*, as well as those of folk and world music—and of the Chilean cueca in this context—is culturally specific. The fact that I am now writing this chapter in the English language and for a global audience has made me aware of the need for discussing the labels and categories by which Latin American music genres have been classified in Western academia, in so far as such a discussion might contribute to a process of generation of knowledge that is more culturally inclusive and democratic.

[53] Mario Rojas already coined the term in an interview with Daniel Muñoz (Muñoz and Padilla 2008, 52)

## TERMINOLOGY AND FALSE FRIENDS: FOLKLORE AND POPULAR MUSIC IN THE ENGLISH AND SPANISH LANGUAGES

### Folk music and popular music in the English language

The term 'folklore' was coined in the mid-nineteenth century[54] in reference to the people and the nation (folk), as well as involving a connotation of education (lore), always pointing towards the 'preservation of the past' (Rowe and Schelling 1991, 4). During the 1950s, the definitions of folk music emphasised ideas of orality and the uninterrupted development of certain musical practices rooted in a specific community. Such approaches would also position the concept of popular music in sort of a lower status, as those musics that either lacked the necessary elements to attain the authentic stature of folk music [Karpeles (1955), (1968); Gelbart (2007)] or were just identified with a lower social status (Vega, Chase and Chappell 1966).[55] The relationship between folk and popular music was also understood as marked by temporality and 'social evolution,' where folk music would precede popular music (Middleton 1981). Others have referred to popular music in terms of the value that listening communities assign to it (Blacking 1981), distribution levels and commercial orientations (Shuker 2005), and capitalist market logic more in general (Tagg 1982). Later on, the concept of world music emerged, adding complexity to the relationship between folk and popular music. Many authors have problematised the idea of world music as one entailing major power issues in terms of being West-centred academia and music industries [Stobart (2009), Bohlman (2002), Born and Hesmondhalgh (2000), and Frith (2000)].

In terms of West-centred conceptualisations, Mark Slobin (2011) reminds us that the concept of folk music started from 'the West's enthusiasm for identifying and analyzing the music of the countryside' (1). He states that as translated into different cultures in Europe, the term can be indistinctly interchanged with that of popular music, as are the cases of Italian *musica popolare* or French *musique populaire*. He adds that beyond the West, the term appears to be imported, relating to colonial periods with their consequent class labels, and such is the case of Latin American *música folclórica* (Ibid). As a result, translation places serious interpretative obstacles when discussing folk music

[54] It came to be used in Europe around 1846, and it was only some decades later (1880) that it became employed in Latin America (Rowe and Schelling 1991).

[55] Carlos Vega also presented the alternative term of *mesomusic*, which is interesting as it can be closely related to the English language notion of popular music—a notion well accepted by the advisory editors of the *Encyclopaedia of Popular Music of the World* (EPMOW) in 1991 (Aharonián 2015 [1997], 251).

and popular music, and so the distinctions between popular music and *música popular*, as well as those between folk music and *música folklórica*, must be clarified.

## From popular music to *música popular*

Citing Middleton, Laura Jordán González and Douglas Kristopher Smith (2011) explained that the English concept of popular music has been broadly defined in reference to three main elements: (1) wide reception; (2) dissemination through mass media; and (3) an association with 'the people' (as the working-class or socially marginalised groups in a broader sense) (20). In contrast, the idea of *música popular* in much of Spanish literature, as well as more generally in that of the Romance languages, has multiple connotations that can be added to these, underlining how it has been widely related to folkloric, rural, ethnic or traditional musics.

Juan Pablo González (1986) was one of the first researchers who advocated the inclusion of a separate category for Latin American Popular Music (LAPM) in scholar music studies debates. He outlined four processes that gave rise to four different subcategories within LAPM. First, the *folklorisation of popular music*—musics of urban origins that 'have come to constitute a communitarian cultural heritage for the Latin American peoples,' obtaining a 'folkloric quality.' He gives these the label *música popular urbana* (urban-popular music), with tango, for example, as one such genre (61). Secondly, the *massification of folklore* produced what he calls *música popular de raíz folklórica* (popular music of folkloric roots). Thirdly, a process of *fusion* that creates *Latin Fusion*, where he highlights bossa nova, new tango or Andean rock (67). And the fourth is a process of *autonomy* that generated the emergence of *Latin Rock* where Latin American musicians aim to emancipate genres from their cultural colonisers by transforming inherited genres such as rock, through the lyrical content and the use of local language and sometimes slang (68-69). It is worth noting that he uses the terms of folklore and popular music indistinctly, as he asserts that 'the field of popular music is traversed by other unmediated, local, traditional, and highbrow musics' (2016, 121). Of all of these terms, I am most interested in his concept of *música popular urbana*, which will be, from here on, translated as urban-popular music throughout this thesis (in the same sense I discuss urban-popular cueca). The idea of modern, urban musics that have become the signature of local communities is precisely how I understand the Chilean cueca in its revival period.

### Spanish usages of *música folklórica, música popular, el pueblo* and *lo popular*

Sydney Hutchinson (2011) also examines the complexities of translation when using the term *popular* in music, explaining that the Spanish phrase *música popular* is closely related to the notion of *el pueblo,* thus acquiring a class connotation, and is usually applied to musics of oral tradition. She also discusses several other terms used in the context of Latin American music, which contribute to better understand the meanings of terms *folklore* and *popular* in a Latin American context. In particular, the author classifies the terms *folklórico, tradicional* and *popular* as belonging to a social dimension, and she understands them as referring to musics of oral tradition. While *folklórico* (mostly used indistinctly with *tradicional*) has a clear political component related to national identity, the term *popular* incorporates notions of class-struggle and marginalisation. On the other hand, she classifies the terms *criollo* (creole) and *típico* (typical) as belonging to a spatial dimension. *Criollo* would refer to (Latin) American-born people of Spanish (or European) descent, whereas *típico* indicates those expressions belonging to an imagined national culture (248-252).

In the Chilean context, I understand the terms *folklórico, tradicional, criollo* and *típico* to be associated with both national identity and rural imaginaries, under the considerably generalised belief 'that national identity [is] best found among the peasantry' as 'an ideal form of community in contrast to industrialising urban societies' (248). In other words, I understand these terms to belong to an official or hegemonic culture. And, on the other hand, I understand the terms *popular* and *el pueblo* as related to the experience of lower social classes and marginalisation, mostly (but not exclusively) in urban settings.

Now, according to Rowe and Schelling (1991), *popular* culture in Latin America has been understood mostly in relation to three understandings. Firstly, one that refers to the rural world as the sanctuary for authentic traditions, which are threatened by modern mass culture. Secondly, the assumption that Latin American development pursues the contemporary culture of 'developed' capitalist countries. And thirdly, the notion of subaltern cultures providing contents for potential alternative hegemonies (2). On the other hand, these understandings have been theorised upon within the disciplinary frameworks of both folklore and mass culture (3).

Gabriel Salazar (1985) explains how the notion of *el pueblo* has held two different meanings in the discipline of history. The first one has to do with the understanding of

*pueblo* as 'nation.' The *popular* subject would then be 'a unique and indivisible entity that carries in itself the national historicity' (11). The problem is that national consciousness does not develop at the same level in all the diverse groups of society, nor does it hold the same characteristics. Thus, a second meaning would refer to 'the alienation drama that is suffered by one part of the nation as a consequence of the other part's historical acting' (13). As this drama is only lived by one part of the nation, this is the only part that can develop a 'sense of solidarity,' which in contrast with the sense of 'homeland,' it gives rise to collaborative relations between 'Chileans of flesh and blood' (15). This is why, according to this view, *el pueblo* can be defined as that part of the nation with real historical power. This perspective once again reaffirms the ability to articulate cultural resistance from the perspective of the sufferers of the 'alienation drama,' among other things, through their cultivation of cueca in its multiple forms. This idea will still be current more than two decades later, as shown in the opening lines of the documentary film 'Cuequero' (2010):

> *Lo popular* in Chile historically constitutes a common reserve. It appears like a marginal mass that extends across the whole nation, (…) given the compulsory need of self-building their identity, but always in the margins of the dominant system. *El pueblo chileno* comes fundamentally from there. (Videla, 2010)

Taking all of these views into consideration, I understand *lo popular* to be critically defined by the *experience of margins*, bringing about alternative cultural possibilities for building society as a whole.

## The cueca between *lo popular* and folklore

In relation to the cueca, Rodrigo Torres describes the urban-popular cueca—also known as *cueca chilenera, cueca brava,* and *cueca chora*[56]—as a type of cueca that 'has been widely ignored, although it is quite well-established as an urban-popular expression of the genre' (2003, 150). He further suggests that the lack of attention to this type of cueca owes to its *popular* formal qualities: 'the distinctive marks of its vocal timbres, of the sound of its instruments, and of the movements and gestures of its dance' (151). He understands the cueca to be a place where '*popular*[57] identity and its memory' are 'maintained and reproduced,' being 'one of the most vital and original traditions of urban-popular music to have emerged in [Chile]' (156).[58]

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[56] See glossary for definition.
[57] My emphasis.
[58] And furthermore, when regarding one of the cueca's ancestors, the *zamacueca*, Torres insists on its identification with social groups, elites or *popular*, establishing its quality of being 'a place of

Regarding the cueca in relation to folklore, Torres understands this notion to be the product of a bond between power and identity construction, where 'what is regularly designated as folklore is a mediation, an external device of representation that establishes a cut-out and a symbolisation, often of essentialist character, of the represented *popular*[59] cultures or traditions' (2004, 54)

Similarly, Jorge Martínez (2003) rejects the process of folklorisation of the cueca, which produces 'crystallised forms, museum objects, [that] appear to "project" and represent [an identity] outside of any context, as stuffed corpses: the Chilean "cueca" as the space of exclusion of many possible cuecas that are equally Chilean' (81). Both Torres and Martínez understand folklorisation as a mechanism that transforms the music into a stagnant, corrupted, museum-piece-like music, in the process supplanting the more hybrid and dynamic *popular* musics. Christian Spencer (2011a) reinforces this idea when he asserts that during the 1990s, after democracy was restored in Chile, a new music scene was developing, in which the cueca 'ceased to belong exclusively to the *traditional folkloric* canon and was transformed into an expression linked to *popular* music' (15); a cueca that Rodrigo Torres (2010) would describe as 'local, urban, contemporary, civil cueca, (…) liberated from all those ties imposed in that time, citizen cueca, composed by young people, for young people' (119).

As we will see, the cueca *folklórica* corresponds to the *huaso* style, which I have also called *creole* cueca elsewhere. And the *popular* cueca—encompassing the variants that have developed within socially marginalised urban communities in Chile (*cueca brava* or *cueca chilenera* in Santiago, and *cueca chora* in Valparaíso, etc.)—corresponds to this other cueca, that has been revived by a younger generation in recent decades, and which I have chosen to call, in the context of this thesis, the *urban-popular cueca*.

## CHILEAN CUECA: BETWEEN MARGINS AND INSTITUTIONALISM

### Historical background: the conquest, colonisation and independence of Chile

The Conquest period in Chile was initiated in 1541 with the foundation of Santiago, and ended in 1598 when a frontier was established between Spanish and native domains. Over two centuries of colonial dominance followed, which according to many historians shaped the social structures that prevail in Chilean society today: (1) A Spanish-

differentiation' where the varied sentiments of 'ignorance, disdain or friction between cultural styles and behaviours—bourgeois or popular—(…) come together' (2008, 6).

[59] My emphasis.

creole elite, of indisputable social and economic dominance throughout the colonial period, and who remained landowners after independence was attained. By the eighteenth century this group was merged with emerging merchants who imprinted their new bourgeois elements over the aristocratic principles (see De Ramón 2000, Collier 2004); and (2) the rest, *el pueblo*, the wide and diverse majority of Chile's population. The elite's 'historical fear' from indigenous uprisings triggered their aversion towards the lower classes and favoured the emergence of a socially legitimised abusive regime of repression that would extend until the beginning of the twentieth century. Following Napoleon's invasion of Spain and the deposition of King Ferdinand VII in 1808, Chile's independence was attained after ten years of conflict between royalists and patriots, when independence was ultimately declared in 1818 by Bernardo O'Higgins, the Supreme Director of the new republic.

Although O'Higgins accomplished a few inaugural arrangements, mainly regarding the cultural, educational, and urban fields, he had to face an economic crisis combined with the severe opposition of the aristocracy and the Church, as well as many uprisings in the southern territory—most of which at this point was still royalist—which finally led to his abdication in 1823. The following period, between 1823 and 1833, is often referred to as an anarchic period, filled with economic crises, lack of political experience of governors, and the political pressure of the dominant groups that constituted the opposition, including the Church (Sagredo 2014). However, Gabriel Salazar (2012) regards this period as one where real democratic opportunities for the republic were in incubation. Two main Constitutions (1822 and 1828) were written in this period, which according to him aimed to develop the republican order through a considerably democratic political project in which 'the provincial towns, the producing (non-commercial) businessmen, and, in general, those who professed democratic ideas (i.e. the 2/3 of the country's adult population)' participated (18). In his view, this movement was suddenly interrupted by a dictatorial irruption led among other people by the tough Diego Portales (1793-1837), with whom an authoritarian period began, a period where governance was always in favour of the dominant groups, and therefore issues of inequality abounded. This 'period' is understood by Salazar as the whole of the history of the Republic of Chile, as he affirms that 'after two hundred years of republican life, everything remains, in essence, the same' (17).

### 1830-1860: the installation of cueca during the conservative governments

Chile's social structure during this period was a faithful reproduction of earlier colonial relations, where the Spanish inheritors owned most of the lands and were entitled to the political control of the country. This was a time when the two main political factions of the elite, conservatives (landowners and the Church) and liberals (bourgeois), were fiercely disputing the power over the new republic, until conservatives overpowered liberals through a military confrontation in 1830, which, along with the 1833 Constitution, marked the beginning of the conservative stage, known to be extremely authoritarian and aristocratic (see Sagredo 2014). On their part, working class groups[60] continued to live in precarious conditions, and thus, this period was characterised by protests, delinquency and social disorder (Salazar 2012, 28). In the meantime, while the fame of the *(zama)cueca*[61] had already been nurtured in the *chinganas*[62] (or *popular* taverns) for some time, during the decade of 1830 the cueca extended its social approval over the high-class ballrooms in Santiago. Already in 1835, it was included for the first time in the theatre, the most legitimised cultural activity among the elites, and it was established by 1840 as one of the many aristocratic dances (see Spencer 2007).[63]

This was a time when the Chilean national identity had to be defined for the first time. Culturally speaking, Donoso argues that the dominant groups in Chile did not have a cultural identity of their own, but they rather imported European traditions. However, the lower classes did not have access to such European models, in a context where the two constituting classes of Chilean society—the rich and the poor—scarcely had spaces of encounter, and therefore, were able to develop cultural expressions of their own that

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[60] The working class was integrated by the urban *rotos* (who could be craftsmen, servants, hawkers, etc. or simply unemployed), the rural peasants and *huasos* who worked in the country estates or haciendas, and the marginal groups who did not have an occupation (Sagredo 2014 and Donoso 2007, 91). The *china* was also part of this group, and was mainly known to be the female partner of the huaso. Her name derives from the Quechua language, and relates to the figure of the indigenous woman who served the Spanish conqueror (Garrido 1976, 68). The peasant woman of the nineteenth century might have inherited this name when related to the huaso. Of course this group cannot be treated as a homogeneous mass, but they had in common the precariousness of their economic situation.

[61] The name *zamacueca* was definitely substituted by its short version cueca by the end of the nineteenth century. In this context, I will refer to cueca and zamacueca indistinctively, always referring to the Chilean version of zamacueca (and then cueca), rather than the Peruvian version from which they are supposed to be derived.

[62] The word *chingana* comes from the quechua language and means 'hideout.' It was adapted by the Chilean language and came to mean 'ordinary tavern,' according to Rodolfo Lenz (Garrido 1979, 171). For more on the chinganas see Donoso 2007.

[63] This is why so many scholars and theorists share the claim of the cueca being cross-cutting to the whole social spectrum in Chile. The cueca did enjoy of this generalised acceptance for at least a couple of decades to come, although not without suffering the continuous limitations of the controlling classes who were always in conflict with the cultural manifestations of *el pueblo*.

could distinguish them from other cultural identities, providing the cultural background that the elites needed to establish their national imaginary (2007, 90-91).[64] The State and ruling groups used the theatre as an educational tool in their attempt to spread their national morals and values, but realising their failure, they had to accept these values from *lo popular* in order to build the national identity. This allowed the entrance of cueca to the theatre, which by 1850 was completely installed and widely respected (111-114).[65]

### 1860-1925: the rise and fall of cueca in a liberal society

In 1860 a process of political diversification took place when the liberal party integrated the Parliament forming the liberal-conservative fusion; this only legitimised the prevailing order, nurturing the parliamentary oligarchy that would reign until the twentieth century (Salazar 2012). Working-class groups were not represented in the parliament, so they initiated their protests in 1880. An important character of this period was José Manuel Balmaceda (18-1891), who became president in 1886. A very controversial figure, his political approach was much more authoritarian than what the liberalised parliament was used to, so he became politically isolated. He was, however, a political hero in the eyes of *popular poets* of that time, and this can be read in multiple *décimas* and cuecas they wrote in his honour. Finally, there was a congress rebellion which led to a civil war in 1891, resulting in Balmaceda's surrender and suicide. With this event the parliamentary period began, characterised by the supremacy of the legislative power over the executive. The State continued to be controlled by the liberal faction.[66]

The political shift towards liberal values had its repercussions in the cultural sphere as well. The conservative principles of austerity, modesty, as well as Catholic morals, were progressively becoming obsolete, being replaced by more tolerant, cosmopolitan values that tended to follow European models, with wider cultural interests and refined lifestyles. By the mid-nineteenth century, several cultural institutions were inaugurated in Chile,[67] and such a cultural blooming was accompanied by the

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[64] According to the testimonies of the elites and European travellers, as well as from subsequent historians' interpretations, it was very difficult for dominant groups to impose the cultural models they wanted, and therefore they had to import them from the ever-ignored bases of society in order to build the national identity. And this fact is what according to Donoso seals the deep connection between the popular and the national (2007, 117).

[65] On censorship towards the *chinganas* and other cultural practices associated with *lo popular* see also Torres (2008).

[66] According to Salazar, 'between 1860 and 1925 no political group changed the illegitimately installed 1829 institutional order' of Diego Portales (20).

[67] See Spencer 2007 pp.163-172.

governmental impulse to continue developing this notion of a national identity which it had begun building in the past decades. The development of the fields of theatre and literature contributed to the dissemination of patriotic creole symbols. Additionally, chinganas continued to be at the junction between 'exaltation of the nation (the national) and public entertainment (*lo popular*[68])' (Spencer 2007, 166). The cueca went through an important cultural shift during this period: it transited from orality to literacy. Since the 1850s several musicians began a tendency to reinterpret the cueca by composing instrumental pieces inspired in its form, and also including cuecas in art-music repertoires. Although the cueca was considered the national dance, some of its excessive manners were not adequate to the aristocratic ballrooms (González and Rolle 2005, 87), and thus, a formal distinction progressively emerged between an aristocratic and a *popular* cueca. The written or literate cueca was related to the elite's ballrooms while the oral cueca remained mostly unchanged within the *popular* chinganas. The cueca saw its last years of generalised popularity during the decades of 1880 and 1890.

By the turn of the century, the State's inefficiency, economic crises, and the sustained impoverishment of the lower classes led to 'the centenary crisis,' (Sagredo 2014), also called the 'crisis of representativeness' (Salazar 2012). This was a period of several uprisings by emerging political groups that were defending their rights against the distrustful members of this empowered parliament; and also a period of subsequent repressions and massacres by the dominant elites (a common example being the 1907 massacre in *Escuela Santa María de Iquique*).[69] These events forced the oligarchy to start negotiating arrangements to solve the so far unattended social situation (*la cuestión social*). Thus, in 1920 Arturo Alessandri Palma was the first middle-class politician to become president in the history of Chile.

### 1925-1990: the depurative re-nationalisation of cueca between dictatorships.

The 1925 Constitution moderated the differences between the legislative and the executive, restoring some of the presidential faculties. However, its reforms were not enough to end with the social instability, so Alessandri resigned his position in 1925. In 1927 Carlos Ibáñez del Campo, a military man who eliminated any opposing forces around him, reached the presidency as the only candidate, with the 98% of the votes. Right from the beginning, he set an authoritarian regime that would be finally fought and

[68] My emphasis.
[69] For more on this see Salazar 2012, Salcedo 2014 and De Ramón 2000.

defeated by union movements in 1931.[70] Due to these repressive mechanisms, his government is often regarded as a dictatorship, under which, a lack of political discussion opened up space for debates about the desired contents and symbols of an adequate nationalism. Thus, an idealised figure of the peasant (or *huaso*) was promoted as a model of the creole identity, and numerous huaso groups were soon disseminated along with their stylised cuecas (Rojas 2010, 83). There was a strong bond between the traditional oligarchies of agrarian origins and the figure of the huaso and peasant folklore. Accordingly, such oligarchic groups together with the State attempted (successfully) a 'Chileannisation of the country' (González and Rolle 2005, 366) imposing this creole imaginary of the central zone over the whole national territory. As decades earlier, a sort of 'domestication of peasant music' (367) took place so it could adapt to its current urban environment. This music was spread in a revival attempt through 'theatre, cinema, radio and records' (369), where the figures of the huaso and the cantora played prominent roles. The new huaso groups were not formed by actual peasants, but by their educated, rural-high-class descendants, elaborating an urbanised and stylised version of their ancestors and their music. Emblematic examples of these groups are *Los Cuatro Huasos* (1927-1956), *Los Quincheros* (1937-) and *Los Provincianos* (1938-1958). They conformed their repertoires using peasant songs and 'cleansing them' from their vulgarities (378). Los Provincianos were the only group belonging to a lower-middle class, and therefore they were a better fit for the political environment of those years—the democratic turn that had begun in the 1930s after Ibáñez's authoritarian regime. While the *cantora* belonged to the rural world, in the new context of mass cultures and the spectacle world, they too had to adapt to the growing cultural industries. In this context, the peasant cantora was soon transformed into a folklorist (or a folklore artist). The most well-known cantoras in the 1930s and 1940s were Derlinda Araya, Esther Martínez and Petronila Orellana. They helped to establish the figure of the female folklorist within mass cultures, where later on Violeta Parra (1917-1967), Margot Loyola (1918-2015) and Gabriela Pizarro (1932-1999) (González and Rolle 2005, 372) would take tremendous relevance.[71]

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[70] Although some changes were accomplished during this period, Salazar (2012) interprets it as the same old political ways of exerting paternalism over a working class that was not able to exert its sovereignty. He explains that the foundation of the *Partido Comunista* in 1922, the *Partido Socialista* in 1933, and the *Frente Popular* in 1936 only served to consolidate a left wing that would integrate the 'congress family' as one of the many siblings who nurtured from one same 'legal mother,' the Constitution. As he sees it, the 1925 Constitution was a 'seldom retouched copy of that of 1833.' There were some changes, but the truth is that the political power was always ready to repress the popular sovereignty, since this sovereignty was and had historically been constitutionally outside of the legal framework (21-22).

[71] See chapter 6 for a thorough discussion and historical overview of the figure of the cantora.

In contrast, another style of cueca emerged from the marginalised neighbourhoods of the country's main cities, Santiago and Valparaíso (see Fig. 0.1 and 0.2), commonly known as *cueca brava*, *cueca chora*, or *cueca chilenera*, and which I understand as the *urban-popular cueca*. Frequently associated with violent and vulgar environments, this cueca was never considered a referent of national identity by the hegemonic circles (González and Rolle 2005, 395), but was rather rejected and stigmatised. When Salvador Allende reached the presidency in 1970 as the first Socialist candidate, the country was already polarised in a situation where the political tie between left and right wings progressively led to a climate of violence and agitation. And just a few years later, led by Augusto Pinochet, the military forces seized power in 1973 and seventeen years of military dictatorship followed. During the years of Pinochet's dictatorship, this *urban-popular cueca* was suppressed by the regime, being banned from the official media, as the 'bohemian night' in *popular* neighbourhoods was shut down (Rojas 2009, 69). As Araucaria Rojas explains, however, folklore was not entirely interrupted during the dictatorship, as long as it was uncontroversial and contributed to fulfilling the regime's ends. Thus, *música folklórica* kept sounding through this period, with, however, a much-reduced performing platform, since national radio and record label industries were only exceptionally distributing local music due to their diminished economic situation. On the other hand, most of the venues where these musicians used to perform had been shut down. Moreover, there were some particular styles of cueca, such as the *urban-popular cueca*, that were completely eliminated as the *apagón cultural* (cultural blackout) advanced, mainly due to their association either with contesting political movements—and their 'sound'[72]—or lower classes. The result was that, while *Los Chileneros*—the quintessential urban-popular cueca group, constituting the 'source musicians' in the revival movement[73]—lost the space that they had finally started enjoying in the Chilean music industry of the 1960s and early 1970s, *Los Huasos Quincheros* became the most prominent folk group of these years, representing the official *cueca huasa*, which led it to be indivisibly associated to the regime by the Chilean population. Accordingly, in 1979 the cueca was declared the national dance by legal decree. As we now know, it was the cueca huasa, creole cueca, or cueca *folklórica*, the one that was fully supported during the regime. Nonetheless, *popular* cuequeros continued to perform clandestinely in private

[72] As an example, Andean instruments were banned for a certain period of time due to their association with the *nueva canción* music-political movement (see Morris 1986 and also chapter 4).
[73] A more detailed overview of *Los Chileneros* and their influence can be read in chapters 4 and 5.

spaces and, crucially, aside from the music industry, leaving thus behind any monetary rewards. This was the case of many so-called 'resistance cuecas' of this period.[74]

## POST-DICTATORSHIP CUECA: DE-FOLKLORISATION

The immediate post-authoritarian period was one of very gradual steps towards the recovery of a true democracy. One of the first measures in this period was the creation of the National Commission of Truth and Reconciliation in 1990, which sought to clarify the human right violations held during the period of the military regime. Its first report (Rettig Report), detailed 3,550 human rights violation accusations, specifying the people who died during the years of dictatorship, and establishing a series of compensation and reparation measures for the victims and their families. This was a start, but it did not account for the thousands of people that were unfairly imprisoned and tortured, a report which only appeared two decades later (Valech Report, 2011). This is to say that the first years of democratic transition in Chile developed slowly and timidly, while society was going through a healing process in every one of its realms, culture being no exception. Later, in 2003, the Valech commission was formed, which in 2011 would publish the Valech Report that accounted for the over 40,000 victims of both torture and murder during the Pinochet regime. This meant the breakdown of a tacit silence code that had been in place since democracy was restored. Since the mid-2000s Chile has also seen a process of political awakening of younger generations[75] who have gathered in the streets to fight for basic rights such as education, healthcare, and most recently, gender equality.[76]

Even when democracy has been restored, I believe that, to a considerable extent, Chilean politics still operate to serve the interests of the same dominant groups. The 1980

[74] The *cueca sola* is an emblematic example of resistance cuecas of this time. It was created in the context of the AFDD (*Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos*, or Disappeared Convict Families Aggrupation), when 25 women who shared this experience got together to form a folkloric group. They were first presented in the Caupolican Theatre in Santiago in 1978 (Rojas 2009, 59). The cueca sola shares the typical musical and poetic form of any cueca. However, in the choreography the couple is replaced by a widower who dances by herself, usually with a photo of her disappeared husband pinned on her chest. Then there is the militant cueca, which were the cuecas with political content that were promoted by famous folklorists, such as the cases of Gabriela Pizarro (communist party) or Sergio Sauvalle (socialist party). The cueca was in this context transformed into a 'pamphlet' (63), and they were clandestinely sung in concerts or *peñas* (venues for *popular* entertainment).

[75] Such younger generations had been described a decade earlier as apathetic and depoliticised (Muñoz 2011, 118).

[76] *Revolución de los Pingüinos* (Penguin's Revolution) massive student demonstrations in 2006, 2008, 2011 and 2016 constitute an emblematic example of this.

constitution that was written for the Pinochet regime [77] is still in place today. While it has had some considerable modifications,[78] certain structural elements continue to guarantee systematic social injustice. This injustice is occasioned, among other things, by extreme protection of property rights and the subsequent ruthless capitalist system that has governed Chilean society since the age of Pinochet. In fact, since 2014 there has been a movement working towards the establishment of a Constituent Assembly in order to attain the structural reforms that can provide a new constitutional framework more in accordance with the present socio-political situation in Chile. Many steps were taken, but under the current government, the support to these efforts has been discontinued.[79] Impunity is also an incongruence which has not been resolved so far. Firstly, those who have been found guilty of crimes against humanity during the dictatorship period were sent to a prison that was specially built for them in 1995 (*Punta Peuco*) where they are given special conditions and facilities, and which still functions today. Strikingly, a few months ago, seven of these convicts were released by the Supreme Court in response to their writs of protection (Espinosa 2018). Moreover, even when youth-led street mobilisations and social movements are growing, police repression continues to trespass legal limits, and this can be seen in social networks after almost every public demonstration. Furthermore, there are countless examples of nepotism and cronyism, both in politics and the world of business.[80] As mentioned above, thanks to the current capitalism-oriented constitutional framework, access to decent healthcare, education, housing, and opportunities, is always mediated by acquisitive power. In other words, not much is new. Throughout the history of Chile, there have been several authoritarian cycles to re-establish the 'order,' order as understood by the dominant groups, using the same old political tools to exert paternalism over the people of lower social classes who have not been able to fully exert their sovereignty (Salazar 2012, 21-24). This is what young cuequeros are resisting today, through their contemporary urban re-interpretation of the (still) official national cueca.

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[77] One of its main ideologists was Jaime Guzmán, founder of the quintessential conservative party in Chile's politics today, UDI (*Unión Demócrata Independiente*)

[78] Some of these modifications implied, for example, the elimination the principles by which presidents were named senators for life after their presidential terms, the abolition of the faculty to arbitrarily design senators (rather than them being democratically elected), and the removal of the principle of legal subordination of civil society to the military.

[79] See https://www.asambleaconstituyentechile.cl/la-reforma-se-retrasa-en-el-nuevo-gobierno/

[80] See for example the recent case of president Piñera retracting his brother's appointment as ambassador in Argentina (Telesur 2018).

In relation to the 'official' reluctance towards this urban-popular cueca, it is worth mentioning a recent example. In 2000, in Ricardo Lagos's presidency opening ceremony, the group *Los Chileneros* were invited to perform along with dancers Rita Núñez (Hernán Núñez's daughter) and Hiranio Chávez in a formal cueca presentation. This event is a strikingly important milestone, as this was the first time in many decades that a cueca that was not related to the huaso tradition could be presented in such an official event. Moreover, it was the first time that the urban-popular cueca was given the dignity and recognition of being presented as representative of national culture in front of a huge international audience (15 presidents and 70 international delegations). And of course, it got the condemnations of many parliament members who even got to write an official letter of disapproval for this style of cueca being performed in such an important official act:

> The act did not represent Chilean music whatsoever. (…) Such a presentation was quite distasteful because it did not represent at all those who have been the most authentic exponents of Chilean music. (…) While there are so many prestigious folkloric groups not only in Chile but around the world, the one who acted did a presentation similar to what could be offered in a *tanguería* [or tango venue], because the couple seemed to be dancing tango rather than Chilean music. (María Angélica Cristi MP, in Torres 2008, 149)

As stated in the introduction to this chapter, my aim here is to analyse how this variant of the cueca has moved away from the category of folklore (de-folklorisation) and in turn got closer to the idea of *música popular*, which I understand in relation to three concepts: (1) a manifest relation to *el pueblo* and *lo popular*, in terms of a working-class belonging and/or identification; (2) despite moving away from folklore, there is a persistent association with what they understand as *traditional* and *Chilean*—which does not necessarily relate to nationalism. This, paradoxically, materialises in *música folklórica*; and (3) a process of innovation—in form and content—that allows for the entrance of fusion or quotation of other genres present in the urban musical environment, which in the case of the cueca may be tango, jazz, etc. These three concepts can be well-explained through the conversations I held with my consultants. While regarding the first of these (association with *el pueblo*) all of them expressed an intentional reference to *lo popular*, in relation to the second (the defence of tradition) and third (innovation) concepts, my consultants were divided between those more prone to aesthetic experimentation and innovation, and those more reluctant to it, as well as some who manifested certain degrees of both tendencies.

## An association with *lo popular*

Of the approximately thirty revival cueca groups I interviewed, all of them have in common the pursuit of a *popular* aesthetics which goes beyond musical style. It refers more to the understanding of cueca as the *fiesta popular*, with the cultural practices and behaviours it implies. Therefore, talking about this *urban-popular cueca* today is not purely talking about folklore or a national tradition, but rather about everyday life, about family traditions, about neighbourhoods, about a way of communicating, in the context of profound identification with *lo popular*. And this identification is in concordance with their main musical referents: all of the groups I have interviewed take as their referent, among others, one particular cueca group, *Los Chileneros*. From them, these bands take the repertoires, musical styles, ways of singing—quite importantly vocal placement, as described in chapter 4—and in general, the form of the urban-popular cueca as developed in Santiago.

First of all, my consultants have pointed out the link with the inherent festive quality of the cueca, which some of them have associated with a *popular* social background. Accordingly, Rodrigo Miranda, from *Los Trukeros* (1997-), refers to the cueca as the *Chilean fiesta* and explains how it synthesises *popular* wisdom, in the sense that its practice evokes memories of his family life gathering around the cueca and folkloric practices. As he declares,

> (…) but when I came to the cueca, one finds a real synthesis (…) it is the 'synthesis of the Chilean song' but it is the synthesis of *popular* wisdom. And where does the popular wisdom manifests itself? In the gathering, therefore, the cueca is the *fiesta*, it is the only Chilean rhythm [that is] really festive. (Rodrigo Miranda, personal communication, 23rd January 2017)

Rodrigo Torres, also explains how the festive quality of this particular type of cueca has to do with a social background in which the degree of discipline exerted over the body is low enough to allow for more uninhibited behaviours. As he explains, it is about 'A *popular* culture where festiveness is a marker of a very powerful [social] difference' which relies on how 'the bodies (…) are disciplined and built' (Rodrigo Torres, personal communication, 25th January 2017). He relates this idea to the recurring historical rejection towards this type of cueca by the hegemonic circles of Chilean society. In his article 'El Arte de Cuequear,' he explains this idea in more detail:

> (…) the *popular* manifestations of dance, the gestures and sensuality of the dancers, the *popular* body in short (and, incidentally, the way in which music contributes to the construction of that body), has been the most reiterated evidence by which the enlightened class has considered the

> *popular*[81] way of cueca to be disgraceful and distasteful, thus justifying its marginalisation. (2003, 151)

Now, the quintessential symbol that has been historically rejected by hegemonic circles is the figure of the *roto*. Mario Rojas asserts that 'it is very difficult for anyone living in this country to escape from the State's influence, from the point of view of the State symbols,' which have nothing to do with *lo popular*. He explains how the State and the dominant circles of Chilean society have never understood their value, but have rather despised them and tried to conceal their cultural expressions.

> the only value that the oligarchy assigns to the *roto chileno*, to *mestizaje* in particular, it is that mischief, the roto is half-dumb, half-foolish, he thinks he is astute, he's half sly and vivacious but the *patrón* always catches him, he knows him well so he's always going to catch him, even when [the roto] plays smart, so the only value assigned to him is his mischievousness, his jokes. (Mario Rojas, personal communication, 24th January 2017)[82]

And referring to that same picaresque characteristic assigned to the *roto*, Fernando Barrios, from *La Gallera* (2006-) talks about the *guachaca*[83] culture as that same sort of caricature of the Chilean *popular* subjects, 'The drunken fool who plays music and drinks *pipeño*[84], that's the guachaca' (Fernando Barrios, personal communication, 23rd January 2017), and the richness of the cueca and other expressions of *el pueblo* are often misinterpreted by this picturesque portrayal.

Secondly, along with this link to the *fiesta popular*, comes a rejection of folklore as a symbol of nationalism. In this sense, Rodrigo Torres affirms that 'folklore does not exist but as a device for control,' whereby the State manages *popular* culture and moulds it to suit the taste and requirements of the hegemonic classes, creating 'categories of authenticity that are historical constructions and folklore is a device for the construction of Chilean authenticity' (Rodrigo Torres, personal communication, 25th January 2017). In a similar vein, Hernán Rojas, from Los Nogalinos (2009-), explains how the *traditional* (official, folkloric) cueca does not move him. Instead, he explains that, for him, 'the cueca in itself, more than being the traditional dance of Chile—a decree signed by Pinochet, which, for most of us *cuequeros* is absolutely meaningless—is clearly linked to the social' (Hernán Rojas, personal communication, 1st April 2016).

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[81] Emphases on the world *popular* are mine.
[82] See glossary for definition of terms.
[83] See glossary.
[84] *Pipeño* is a Chilean slang word for cheap, low-quality wine.

## An association with Chilean folklore: the defence of tradition

There is undoubtedly a strong sense of devotion for Chilean traditions and their safeguarding among many of my consultants, which I, however, interpret as non-nationalistic. As Daniel Leiva commented, it is about a cueca that was 'way apart from this legal decree that is the national dance,' being, in turn, a tradition that 'you could appropriate through the Chilean identity, that of those (…) *really* Chilean' (personal communication, 19th January 2017). This defence of tradition may be observed in two forms. The first one addresses an understanding of *Chileanness* and *the national* as related to the history of my consultants' personal lives, local environments (neighbourhoods), upbringings, and family histories. In other words, local historical customs and ways of being. Fernando Barrios, for instance, and in consonance with the defence of *lo popular* as well, explains this quite eloquently:

> (…) many of (…) our grandparents, had a direct relationship with folklore. (…) There was a real experience of folklore and of living *a la chilena* [or 'the Chilean way']. A way of being, (…) really people of *el pueblo*, who had a culture of their own, a way of eating, a way of dressing, a way of laughing, a way of celebrating in the Chilean style with a kind of (…) link in *popular* culture (Fernando Barrios, personal communication, 23rd January 2017)

The consecrated cueca pianist, Aladín Reyes, also explained that 'Chilean folklore is part of our lives because we live in this. Many things are learned from the cueca, [it] speaks of life,' and it 'is [also] a connection to my land, to my zone' (personal communication, 21st April 2016). In a similar vein, Rodrigo Miranda asserts that 'people need to have an encounter with their own history, their own part in folklore' (personal communication, 23rd January 2017), while Luis Castro González, from *Los Chinganeros* (1942-),[85] refers to the cueca as both being 'a way of life' and his 'national anthem,' which has been 'maintained by family tradition, oral culture' (Luis Castro González, personal communication, 10th April 2016).[86] Furthermore, María Ester Zamora (1947-),[87] a folklorist related to pre-revival stages of the urban-popular cueca, reinforces this idea of the national where the stylistic differences of the cueca are not relevant because in the

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[85] Luis Castro González is a very important figure. He is the nephew of the great Fernando González Marabolí—author of the seminal cueca book *Chilena o Cueca Tradicional* (1994) and founder of the still current group *Los Chinganeros*. He has dedicated himself to continue with the legacy of his uncle in two different ways: (1) by being the current director the group *Los Chinganeros*, and (2) by organising lectures and workshops where he teaches his uncle's theories, including an alternative narration of the history of Chile, as well as that particular way of singing and composing cuecas. The workshop's name is *Canto a la Rueda*, a concept that will be thoroughly explained and discussed in chapter 5.

[86] Here it is interesting to note that *the national* is interpreted as the local, oral, family traditions of *el pueblo*, which differs significantly from the national symbols that have historically been imposed by hegemonic circles.

[87] The daughter of the famous Chilean folklorist Segundo Zamora (1915-1968), she was brought up within traditions of urban-popular folklore.

end ‘cueca is cueca,’ and it is Chilean: ‘the cueca is the *chilena*,[88] nothing else,’ and she adds ‘whether it’s peasant, wherever it’s from, it is *our* cueca’ (María Ester Zamora, personal communication, 7th April 2016). Similarly, Leslie Becerra, from *Las Primas* (2013-) explains the idea of folklore in the sense of doing something that ‘people have always done’ because they have found sense and identity in it. About the *cantora* and the craft and exercise of folklore, she explains:

> (…) look, for me, the role of the *cantora* today is the same as five centuries ago. The repertoires speak of the same thing, they talk about the lack of love, they talk about the children, they talk about the abuse, they talk about domestic problems, it’s the same (…) that’s why it’s current. When one speaks of folklore, one refers to things that have transcended in time. (Leslie Becerra, personal communication, 23rd January 2017)

The second way in which this defence of tradition takes place has to do with the rejection towards certain (not all) patterns of innovation, which, according to some of my consultants, reflect ignorance, lack of understanding and of the skills entailed in the cueca tradition. Such is the case of Aladín Reyes, who complaints saying that ‘many young people (…) even put rock into the cueca, that’s no longer cueca. (…) [P]utting other unrelated rhythms, removing measures, and adding other completely unrelated things, [removes] the spark of the cueca’ (personal communication, 21st April 2016). The group *Los Piolas del Lote* is formed by two of the greatest post-1990s cuequeros: Dángelo Guerra, founder of *Los Trukeros* (1997-), and Luis Castillo, founder of *Los Tricolores* (2000). They agree on this vision that the cueca should remain within the realm of folklore. When discussing about another cueca group, who plays cueca and *cumbia*, they expressed that ‘(…) they are really *pachangueros*,[89] (…) like opposed to *lo folklórico*, they move away from it and they do something else,’ concluding that ‘within folklore you don’t have to mess around with other styles’ (personal communication, 4th May 2016). Regarding a lack of skill and training, Luis Castro assessed:

> Nowadays, a lot of young people are getting on stage without being professional. Formerly, they wouldn’t let you [on stage] if you didn’t comply with certain patterns of tradition. You couldn’t fall out of tune, for example, you had to know the repertoires that were sung, you improvised in the singing, I mean, (…) they didn’t tell you what they were going to sing, they asked you if you knew all the verses and melodies, and then you could sing with them. (Personal communication, 10th April 2016)

[88] The word *chilena* in this context is another way to referring to the cueca, especially in urban-popular environments.

[89] *Pachanga* is a slang Latin American word that refers to dance parties, and at least in Chile it is applied to genres such as *cumbia*, *salsa*, etc.

Similarly, my harp teacher Diego Barrera, apprentice of the famous Chabelita Fuentes (1931-) from *Las Morenitas* (1954-), and member of *Los Rastrojinos*,[90] comes from a more traditional, rural musical background. As such, he explained that 'The cueca in the countryside reaches the three tones we have studied, tonic, dominant, and subdominant, and with this step of the secondary dominant, and that's it.' While he understands that there may be harmonic variations in the city, he still manifested his displeasure with some particular forms of such variations, as when some musicians 'take harmonic functions of ballads to make cuecas,' thus making 'ballads with a cueca rhythm.' However, he does acknowledge the undeniable process of modernisation and diversification that the cueca is undergoing, as 'we can't lose sight of [this] as a new manifestation of the fact that the cueca is alive' (personal communication, 6th May 2016).

### Bringing new elements to the cueca

A third concept to define what I understand by *música popular* has to do with the openness to borrow elements from other styles and to introduce them into new cueca sounds and aesthetics. This has been a long process, which I propose to have been driven by four different developments: (1) musical experimentation; (2) visual and performative changes; (3) reference to new contemporary discourses; and (4) changes in the mechanisms of knowledge transmission.

Accordingly, Mario Rojas was one of the first in approaching the cueca as *música popular* in the Chilean urban music scene. A musician and producer, he personally knew *Los Chileneros* and other urban-popular cuequeros and undertook research and music projects to bring this hidden cueca culture to the forefront in the urban music scene in Santiago. Regarding those efforts, he remembered how he used to convince people of including cuequeros in spaces that were conventionally associated with *música popular*:

> (…) whenever there is a public event, if there is a hip-hop group, and there are some punks, whatever you like, from youth, can you include *Los Santiaguinos* man?, I mean, cueca, why not? (…) the formats are similar, drums, the guys play well, they sing well (…), the cueca is *música popular*, let's break up the scheme that the cueca is something didactic, or obligatorily a patriotic symbol. It's *música popular*, right? (Personal communication, 24th January 2017)

Firstly, regarding musical experimentation and the introduction of different musical styles into contemporary versions of the cueca, Rodrigo Miranda proudly affirms that his group *Los Trukeros* are pioneers in this subject: 'Fusion occurs when you manage

[90] The name *Los Rastrojinos* comes from Rastrojos, the name of the small town where he comes from near San Vicente de Tagua Tagua, a few miles to the south of the capital.

to mix [different musical] languages and (…) my group, which has 20 years, we are precursors of that. We are part of the groups that have led the vanguard in that aspect' (personal communication, 23rd January 2017). Dángelo Guerra, a former member of this band, also explained that 'The cuecas would be written (…) not in 6/8, [nor with] the typical harmonic regression it has always had. [Also], with some introductions in the middle, it was super jazz-like fusion' (personal communication, 12th April 2016). Similarly, the group *De Caramba* (2008-) is formed by professional musicians in their thirties who are, one way or another, related to jazz music. The music they do is hence permeated by jazz and other soundscapes they have integrated throughout their musician careers, trying to 'recycle the elements that are typical of the folklore of this area and give birth to something else that comes from there, which is a music of our own.' When discussing their composition process, they explained that

> We try to compose not always (…) inspired by the [cueca] rhythms or melodies, but also [by] that whole experience we had when learning the cueca, practising it as they did before, [which entailed] certain sensations and emotions, vertigo at the time of singing, when facing the *rueda* [or circle] of people who (…) have been singing for longer, feeling bad as they humiliate you (…). All those sensations are part of the music. (De Caramba, personal communication, 16th January 2017)

Likewise, Nicolás Lascar from *Voy y Vuelvo* (2010-) affirmed that not only they include different styles in their repertoire, such as Latin waltzes or cumbias, but they also have a more experimental approach in their cuecas. For example, he explained that their introductions were 'a little more exotic than the style of arrangements of the cueca,' (personal communication, 17th January 2017) which was mainly due to their backgrounds being related to Rock music and a scholar training in Classical music. Other ways in which fusion took place was, for example, the case of *Flor de Juanas* (2015-) a 17 women ensemble who do a *murga*—an Uruguayan form of musical theatre that is performed during the carnival season—but singing only cuecas. Their founder, Josy Villanueva, told me: 'I belong to a[n Uruguayan] murga, (…) and I used to say "the carnival of Uruguay is that, but the carnival of Chile is the cueca." Then I said, why not…, *murguear* the cueca, or make a *murga cuequera*?' (Josy, personal communication, 12th January 2017). And finally, *Ellas*, from Valparaíso, explained that 'the strength of *Ellas* is diversity (…). We are not a group of *cueca brava*, neither *campesina* nor *nortina*. "Ultra chilensis fusion" (…) the fusion of the fusion of the fusion,' as told by Daniela Sepúlveda, *La Charawilla* (personal communication, 22nd January 2017).

A second development entails changes concerning the performative and visual aspects of the cueca. Historically the cueca has been largely considered a dance in the first place, with music as mere accompaniment. Thus, cueca musicians—*cantoras* or folk

projection groups—have historically fulfilled the role of playing background music for social events, celebrations, dance competitions, rodeos, etc. However, during the past three decades, performance has taken unprecedented relevance within the practice of the cueca. Such relevance materialises both in new visual aesthetics and new performative mechanisms. For instance, the group *Calila Lila* (2010-) is a good example of the shift by which visual elements traditionally associated with either peasant or urban cueca were substituted by contemporary images. Their explicit purpose was 'trying to change the image of the cueca,' with emphasis on 'dress design,' and 'image,' while also revealing a preference for 'sharp colours, (…) electric (…) and bright' (Kathy and Paulina, personal communication, 19th January 2017). When I asked them about their aesthetic referents, Paulina described the main visual aspects of their performances:

> (…) the fact of, I don't know, using skirts and trousers with bright colours, not using curves and manuscript typographies, [but rather] printed letters and straight lines, you see? (…) I mean you see a photo of us and we could [be] a *cumbia* [band], you see? (…) I mean the dress-code isn't folkloric. (Paulina, personal communication, 19th January 2017)

Another example is *Medio Chile Clavao* (2006-). Their name comes from the expression '*tener a medio Chile clavao*' (having half of Chile nailed), as one of the founding members of the group was in a debt situation with practically 'half of Chile.' Their lyrics thus addressed social problematics such as debt situations, credit cards, lack of health coverage, etc. They therefore felt that performance was vital for their social discourse to be grasped:

> (…) we understood that [performing the cueca] doesn't mean being a rock star; the cueca is a *fiesta* and the *fiesta* has to start from the table, so, one over there another one here, [pointing to the middle of the venue, where the tables were] (…) we started playing, and later we incorporated the *chinchinero*,[91] for example (…) we took them to the show, they played with us and we made a declamation and sang the cueca 'El chinchinero.' (Manuel, personal communication, 21st January 2017)

The third development is characterised by the introduction of contemporary social discourses into the poetic contents of the cueca. This is a much debated issue within the world of the cueca. Some say that the cueca has nothing to do with politics or social movements, as it is precisely practised to forget all afflictions and enter into a festive mood, as María Ester Zamora when she declared that 'for me the cueca is apolitical, because the cueca has to come from the soul. When there is anger and resentment one sings a cheerful cueca, and stops worrying about politics' (María Ester Zamora, personal

[91] *Chinchinero* is a Chilean term that refers to a particular kind of street performer who plays a sort of bass-drum with a high-hat attached to it. The drum has a mechanism whereby it is held on the performer's back with ropes that are also attached to her/his—most commonly his—feet. Thus, they play the drum as they take dancing steps that coordinate the rhythm that sounds out of their performance.

communication, 7th April 2016). Others say that, because social and political issues are implied within the discourses of the cueca—as the cueca deals with real life—it wouldn't be necessary to literally assign such contents to it, or, in other words, 'folklore doesn't need political burdens, neither of gender nor ideological' (Rodrigo Miranda, personal communication, 23rd January 2017). Nonetheless, there are quite a few cueca groups that have felt the need to more literally express their social discourses, and expose their discontent towards social injustice of any kind. In the case of *Las Pecadoras* (2009-) this is a rather distinctive mark. A mixed-gender group, both male and female members are committed with a gender discourse, mostly manifest in the cueca lyrics. Daniela, the lead singer and the main composer of the group, writes cuecas that can represent her, which up until the time of interview did not exist. As she remembered from her initial times in the cueca: 'I wanted cuecas and there were no cuecas, see? (…) it's discouraging, when you listen to the cuecas, you go saying "there's nothing that identifies us as women," you see?' and she went on to explain that for her, the cueca 'is a tool, a medium, a space to say something, (…) it stopped being an entertainment' (Daniela Meza, personal communication, 12th January 2017).

Finally, a fourth development has to do with new mechanisms of transmission, other than oral tradition—which, as we will see in further chapters, has been greatly exalted as a marker of authenticity in the cueca. The urban-popular cueca variant has always been related to a particular, local and reduced community, and this has been especially the case during the years of dictatorship (1973-1990) when, as many cuequeros remember, the *apagón cultural* took place. This has favoured its development through oral transmission,[92] as well as its difficult access. Today, with technological improvements, this type of cueca is more available than ever, and whereas an older generation of new cuequeros (roughly between 1998 and 2006) all knew and learned from the old masters, today many new groups are learning their repertoires online, from

[92] Even when a large number of the cuecas that circulate the urban cueca scenes are authored—and we will see so in chapter 4—their melodies often come from oral tradition. The *popular* poets who have written the cuecas are much easier to identify than those who created the melodies. As we will see further in this thesis, it is often the case that one cueca poem is sung with different melodies in different regions of Chile. There are other cases where a cueca is erroneously given as its author the person who collected it from the countryside. Moreover, these collected cuecas—such as those by Violeta Parra in Chapter 4 (examples 1 and 7)—often present pieces of different poems that might have been inherited from other Hispanic-American traditions. For vast collections of examples of these cases, see Acevedo Hernández (2014 [1953]), Figueroa Torres (2004), Navarrete Araya and Donoso Fritz (2010), and Salinas and Navarrete (2012), among others. Thus, even when the cueca environment is highly mediatised—crucially, with high volumes of recorded material—mechanisms of oral transmission continue to be essential to explain both poetic and musical variations and usages across Chile (and beyond).

YouTube videos or the like. While recording technologies have been enabling new learning mechanisms for quite some time, recent improvements in online access have exponentially increased the numbers of new cuequeros without masters.[93] When I asked about this in my interviews, technology was often taken for granted and not greatly problematised, except for some who expressed their concerns about these ways of learning. Fernando Barrios, from La Gallera, is one such example:

> In 2000 we were in Fotolog, see? (…) suddenly Facebook appears, and everything is different, [then] YouTube, and of course, I feel like that process where it was hard to get a cassette or a CD of [this cueca, is over, and] we learned the songs [from] there. (…) I began to develop my memory differently; you also force yourself like to be more focused. (Fernando Barrios, personal communication, 23rd January 2017)

He continues to explain that the quality of the learning process has decreased through these new methods, lacking the due respect for the inherent complexities of the cueca, under the belief that 'this thing is hard, you have the greatest cantores in this (…) and if I'm going to do it, [I'm going] to do it right, you see? (…) that's the level of consciousness in the end' (Fernando Barrios, personal communication, 23rd January 2017). Another example is Dángelo Guerra, who is now a referent and a mentor for many of the younger cueca groups, as he has been teaching them what he learned from 'the old masters':

> Most of us learned with Nano [Núñez, from *Los Chileneros*]. (…) we learned almost with chisel and hammer. (…) [also] at that time discographies were very difficult to find, now you [can] download all the old cueca albums. (…) [now,] lads learn to sing badly, they don't respect codes, they don't respect the turns, they don't respect the [singing by] hand,[94] they don't respect anything. They throw themselves to whatever comes out, and it doesn't matter if they are out of tune, outside of the singing, outside of the rules, if the song started wrong, if they veil their partner, etc. And that's why one finally ends up deserting, now they say they feel 'master-orphaned' (Dángelo Guerra, personal communication, 12th April 2016)

## CONCLUSIONS

The cueca has played many roles during the construction of the Chilean nation. In its multiple variants, it has served the socially dominant elites to build cultural identities that could respond to their own landowning nostalgia as well as their class codes; it has also served the politically dominant groups to construct national identities potentially able to bring together the whole spectrum of Chilean society; and it has served *el pueblo* to articulate their mechanisms of cultural resistance in a context where their rights and their

[93] It is important to note that this new online learning form is not replacing oral transmission, as groups are still reaching out to the more knowledgeable cuequeros through cueca workshops and private lessons—e.g. Luis Castro González, Chabelita Fuentes, María Ester Zamora in *La Casa de la Cueca*, La Gallera workshops, *Taller de Las Soberanas de la Cueca*, many other experienced cuequeros and musicians who serve as mentors for new musicians—it is becoming a very important learning source, which has much of the older cuequeros worried.

[94] 'Singing by hand' or *canto por mano* refers to the application of the way of singing *a la rueda* to the context of the cueca band of four cantores on a stage. This is explained in more detail in chapter 5.

interests as citizens have repeatedly been ignored. Without intending it, *el pueblo* has held a protagonist role in this history of national formation, providing the content for patriotic images and symbols (and sounds), as well as contributing to construct an alternative, *popular*, Chileanness, 'from below' (Donoso 2007, 90). This has taken particular relevance in the years following Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990) when the urban-popular variant of the cueca has undergone a revival process. Some stylistic and social distinctions within the cueca need to be understood in order to grasp this revival process, and which also involve some terminological difficulties. Throughout this chapter, I have attempted to explain the historical developments that led to the revival period since 1990. I also aimed to discuss the different variants of cueca that result from both stylistic categories (*música folklórica* and *música popular*), and social archetypes (*huaso* and *roto*). This entailed some terminological clarifications by which I analyse the concepts of popular music and folk music both in their English and Spanish usages, crucially leading to the discussion of *el pueblo* and *lo popular* as central concepts in this thesis. Thus, in the context of this thesis, I understand the term *folklórico* (with *tradicional, criollo* and *típico* serving as synonyms) to be associated with national identity,[95] belonging to an official or hegemonic culture imposed from above. The correlate of this understanding of folklore is the *cueca huasa*. On the other hand, I understand the terms *popular* and *el pueblo* as related to the experience of lower social classes and marginalisation, mostly (but not exclusively) in urban settings, whose correlate is the urban-popular cueca.

These clarifications enable me to argue that during the past three decades the cueca has undergone a process of *de-folklorisation*, through which the cueca has moved away from notions of folklore as understood in this thesis, and got closer to the idea of *música popular*. Now, *música popular* is understood here as musics that are (1) deeply entrenched in a specific social group which is known as *el pueblo*, including lower-medium social groups, whose cultural expressions and practices—and very importantly, language—are a source of identity for many cuequeros who might not even belong to this social group; (2) musics that are also still very related to tradition, Chilean culture and local constructions of *Chileanness*, which are still sources of semantic and musical contents; and (3) musics that are now widely open to innovate and include other styles and genres into the realm of cueca.

[95] Let us not forget that, as mentioned above, national identity has often been sought after within rural imaginaries, and so the rural is also understood as closely related to *lo folklórico*.

The use of folklore as a device of State control and as an elite's effort to impose their own hegemonic symbols over society is not new. As Rasnake (1988) points out, 'a major aspect of the power of dominant elites in class societies is their control of the means of symbolic production, especially in the mass media and the schools, and in the control of state-level celebrations such as national holidays' (213). What the recent changes in the urban-popular cueca scene have ultimately shown us is that those national symbols no longer represent the identities and interests of a younger, post-dictatorship generation, who today has more freedom to create their own symbols and to safeguard their own cultural referents. The interest on *the national* has largely decreased among Chilean cueca youths, making room instead for the global, the modern, and *lo popular*. When they do relate to a concept of Chileanness, they do so in terms of a preferably local, class-based concept of belonging. This belonging is related to their own particular upbringing experiences, and more specifically, as we will see in chapter 5, to the figure of the *roto*.

# CHAPTER 4: A STYLISTIC HISTORY OF THE CHILEAN CUECA

## INTRODUCTION

As we know, the cueca has most probably been present in the territory that is today known as Chile for as long as it has existed as a republic, and has thus developed along the socio-political process of the formation of the nation, which I have just outlined in chapter 3. Such a process has also entailed the development of particular sociocultural dynamics that continue to generate tensions in Chilean society today, and which I believe can be further described and explained through the scope of the stylistic developments of this musical genre that has been regarded by Chileans as 'quintessentially Chilean' throughout decades and centuries; that is, the cueca. This chapter thus aims to follow the at times divergent historical paths of the Chilean cueca musical tradition within the context of its socio-historical background.

Chilean cueca, like many other traditional musical practices, is the result of complex historical processes of cultural exchange in the contexts of colonialism, slavery, nation formation, wars, national border delimitations, diaspora, and globalisation. This exchange has taken multiple forms and has operated asynchronously in the different locations where the cueca has developed in Chile—not to mention the case of other places in Latin America, where diverse variants of cueca have developed as well. Cueca is also a complex cultural expression that encompasses three dimensions of expression—music, poetry and dance—each constituting an independent realm with its own complexities. To build a thorough stylistic history of the cueca is thus no easy endeavour; thus, a clear methodology must be established from the start.

I have drawn upon four main sources. Two of them are online music archives, cancionerodecuecas.cl and perrerac.org, which have allowed me to listen to cuecas from 1906 to the present time. *Cancionero de cuecas* presents much of the history of the discographic development of cueca in Chile (1906-1979), especially focused on the folkloric music industry, rather than other genres that might have contained cueca records as well. *PERRERAC* is another online platform that focuses on the music of the *Nueva Canción* movement[96] in which the cueca also figured to a certain extent. By contrast, my

[96] See glossary.

third source, *MúsicaPopular.cl*, does not provide access to the actual music links but provides biographic and discographic information of an extensive survey of Chilean musicians and bands which one can then easily listen to on the web. My fourth source is the dozens of CDs that I have received or bought from the cueca groups I have interviewed and related artists, and which belong to the revival period (roughly between 1993 and 2018).

I have carefully listened to approximately 320 cueca recordings, including different versions of several of them, which has proved helpful for understanding the musical and performative choices that have changed throughout the decades, and also for inferring the extra-musical backgrounds that have favoured those choices. When comparing these cuecas, it is vital to have in mind those extra-musical backgrounds, as they reinforce the idea that a stylistic history of cueca will never be able to account for a linear history, but rather a cluster of complex multidimensional developments that go back and forth in dissimilar ways.

## Methodology

I have attempted to build a document that can coherently illustrate the musical developments of the Chilean cueca throughout the twentieth century. The specific time-frame of the cuecas I have listened to and analysed is 1906-2017, that is, from the oldest available cueca sound record to one of the most recent ones. The steps I have followed to build this analysis are:

1) As mentioned above, I carefully listened to a total of 323 cuecas, and I transcribed the 25 melodies that sounded the most familiar to me, in order to be able to identify standard musical terms, forms, and metrics.
2) I chose eight of those 25 cuecas for closer analysis. These are: (1) 'La Japonesa;' (2) 'Corazones Partidos;' (3) 'Chicha de Curacaví;' (4) 'La Rosa Perdida;' (5) 'La Consentida;' (6) 'El Chute Alberto;' (7) 'La Mariposa;' and (8) 'La Enredadera.' Each of those eight cuecas has had at least three versions recorded in different periods, which allowed me to compare their stylistic changes in time.
3) Of these eight cueca songs, I transcribed 30 versions in total.
4) I individually analysed each one of the 30 pieces, and then I built a summarising comparative analysis of the eight examples (comparing between the three to five versions of each example). Beyond the more noticeable changes in instrumentation and band compositions, score transcriptions have allowed me to

detect the different approaches to melody and rhythm not only in different periods but also between different social and cultural realities at one same period. For the musical analysis of the thirty cueca versions, I have established the following criteria:

a. General instrumentation. I have analysed the timbral characteristics of the cueca bands. Although a guitar will (almost) always be present, the presence or absence of the harp, piano, accordion, and double- or electric-bass can say much of the groups, the styles embraced, and the technological conditions of any given epoch.
b. Rhythmic features. I have analysed the percussive styles and timbres, paying attention for example to the emergence of the *pandero*—a small hexagonal membranophone similar to a tambourine (see Fig. 2.1)—or the drum kit in the recordings. Also, the rhythmic variations of the cuecas can say much about the different social environments where they took place.
c. Vocal features. I have emphatically paid attention to vocal characteristics such as singing styles, phrasing or harmony vocals, as in my opinion such features contain the signature of the style of cueca that is embraced. I believe much of the socio-cultural character of the cueca can be inferred through the different ways of singing.
d. Harmony. I have also considered the (slightly) different approaches to harmony as these can reflect the degrees of dialogue between the folkloric scene in Chile, and other musical soundscapes in and outside the country. Such degrees of dialogue may also indicate what the music industry and/or the government of a certain time was prioritising in terms of cultural developments and identities.

*Figure 4.1. Pandero made by Tatiana Passy Lucero*

*Source: Fieldwork photos and documents, 2016*

5) Revival cuecas (post 1990) are overwhelmingly diverse and abundant. There is much traditionalism still in the scene, so traditional melodies and musical usages have continued to be largely adopted today; however, there are also significant innovative attempts by many groups. I have chosen not to specifically engage in a detailed musical analysis of revival cuecas because, firstly, they are still part of an ongoing process of diversification and thus I do not think I can be in a position to decide on the most relevant/representative of the styles that are being developed in the present time; at times it almost seems as though any given group represents a different style. Instead, I have included some contemporary versions of cuecas as part of the broader analysis of the eight selected songs, understanding the revival as part of the general stylistic developments throughout the past century. Nonetheless, as the revival is the central matter of this thesis, closer attention will be given to the revival cueca in the following chapters, and especially in chapter 5.
6) Finally, I attempted to connect the stylistic developments that have been observed to a more general social history of the cueca and the Chilean music industry, including historical contexts and situations that can help to better explain the changes, the diversity, and ultimately the artistic, musical and performative choices that lie behind the development of the cueca as a musical genre.

### *A brief note on transcription*

Debates on transcription and musical analysis in the context of what has been commonly labelled as 'world music' are abundant in ethnomusicology. Firstly, as Michael Tenzer (2006) points out, the effort of notation often implies certain degrees of

a Eurocentric perspective (4)—just as much as the concepts of 'world music' and 'non-Western music' do, I would add—in so far as it stems from 'the universalist legacy of European Enlightenment thought' (8). For Tenzer, 'structural listening' provides a valuable means for us listeners to properly grasp and value the 'architectural' work of composers, and for performers to build creative interpretations (11). For the purpose of this stylistic analysis, however, the inventiveness of composers as structure builders is not as relevant as the musical and performative choices that each of the cueca interpreters—as well as the producers and those who politically or financially supported each discographic endeavour—made at a given time, which frames their efforts within musical styles that also involve their identification with certain political, social and cultural backgrounds. In this sense, I agree with Philip Tagg (1982) in that such political, social and cultural settings should be an essential part of any analysis:

> …it should be stated at the outset that no analysis of musical discourse can be considered complete without consideration of social, psychological, visual, gestural, ritual, technical, historical, economic and linguistic aspects relevant to the genre, function, style, (re-)performance situation and listening attitude connected with the sound event being studied. (3)

I also build on from Tenzer's acknowledgement of structural listening's potential to 'provide a basis for common understanding and appreciation' (2006, 11). This is precisely what motivated my own transcribing efforts: to have a language through which I can think of and explain the socio-historical developments in the cueca genre throughout the twentieth century and to make such a socio-historical overview available to an audience that has little or no literacy in the musical language of the cueca.

As I am not officially trained in music, transcription was quite difficult for me, and it entailed the design of a particular method, which I present as follows. Firstly, while listening to the survey of 25 cueca melodies that I transcribed (step 1 above), I would write down general aspects such as instrumentation, musical form, and *how it felt* in terms of pace and syncopation, as well as any historical relevance that I might have noticed upon listening. After having chosen my eight examples (step 2), I began the transcription of each of the versions (step 3) using the *Sibelius 7.0* music notation software. This allowed me to write down a melody and then immediately listen to my transcription to check that it fitted the original version. Thus, I was able to promptly correct any mistakes I noticed while at the same time, gain some knowledge about notation. As I moved on to other versions, I would always listen to my transcriptions and compare them with the recordings in a back and forth process until I felt the result was satisfactory. Of course,

this can only be done approximately as real-time musical interpretation cannot be reduced to automatized rhythms.

Nonetheless, technology was a tremendous aid for me to make sure that what I was doing 'sounded' accurate. And this is the key difference with the difficulties I had when interpreting (performing) the music, as seen in chapter 2. While it has required me years of learning and practising the cueca rhythms to finally understand them and be able to perform them, technology has made the process of transcription much quicker (although it must be said I started transcribing with a greater understanding of such rhythms, after some years of performance experience). This is, however, one of the reasons I have not engaged with many post-1990 cuecas. Due to their greater degrees of fusion, their levels of musical complexity are much higher, and even when I could transcribe them, I am not sure I am competent enough today (in terms of knowledge of music theory and history of popular music) to be able to analyse them as thoroughly.

## MUSICAL ANALYSIS

The purpose of this analysis is to build a stylistic history of a genre encompassing over a century of music (1906-2017), and therefore analysis will tend to be focused preferentially in certain aspects, such as vocal styles, phraseology, vocal harmonisations, and general rhythmic, melodic, harmonic and timbral characteristics. I emphasise vocal features because much of the socio-cultural character of the cueca can be inferred through the different ways of singing. Other features, such as instrumentation, rhythm, melodies and even lyrics, in the case of cuecas from oral tradition, can be in many cases explained by contingency—technology, political context, music industry, etc. On the other hand, vocal characteristics might be marked as the essential imprint of each particular style the cueca has gone through. This is actually shown in today's groups, as they have all the information available to choose their musical referents, and those choices are reflected in the distinct ways of singing, which themselves reflect the extra-musical labels with which each group wants to identify.

As mentioned above, I have chosen eight cueca examples to analyse, presenting several versions (belonging to different periods) of each of them that sum a total of 30 cuecas. Most of them belong to the discographic tradition of cueca between the 1920s and the 1970s (available at cancionerodecuecas.cl), and a few other versions reflect traditions associated with peasant life on one hand, or with specific social movements on the other, and finally some more contemporary interpretations. Therefore, generally speaking, my

analysis firstly reflects a broad urban tradition associated with the discographic industry between the 1900s and 1970s, which in most cases, reinterprets and reinvents the peasant cantora tradition. And secondly, it reflects a number of traditions/variants that escape this mainstream industrial cueca, such as the cueca that arose from a more academically-inspired music research in the case of Violeta Parra (1917-1967), or that which emerged within social movements during the 60s and 70s—such as *Canto Nuevo*[97] and nueva canción—or the urban-popular cueca traditions that were deployed, among other less known referents, by Roberto Parra in Valparaíso and by *Los Chileneros* in Santiago. Due to limitations of space and my chosen methodology I have omitted several relevant cueca practitioners, groups and examples, with hopes of developing an extended version of this stylistic history in the future, to give them the attention they deserve.

Finally, when referring to the cantora traditions in my analysis, I draw upon the conceptualisation elucidated by Juan Pablo González (2010). The author talks about the traditional peasant *cantora*, then a refined urbanised version that would make her become an artistic singer or *cantante escénica* proper to the industrial musical and cinematographic scene in Chile especially during the 1950s and 1960s, and the *cantautora*, which alludes to the socially committed singer that has embraced the troubadour style in the 1960s and 1970s. These distinctions will be explained here as needed, and are elaborated upon in chapter 4.

Each of the following cueca examples is presented through three sections. First, a *background* section that outlines the historical context of the song and each of its recorded versions; a second section of *comparative analysis*, featuring a table that summarises the comparison between all versions—which contains an URL link[98] to each of the analysed pieces so that the reader can listen to them in order to have a better idea of the sound—followed by a detailed comparative analysis written in prose, which points out some of the particularities of each version and establishes historical relations between them; and a third section with the versions' *score transcriptions*. To ensure better understanding, general musical features of the cueca can be reviewed in chapter 1 (section 'The Music of the Cueca').

[97] See glossary.
[98] The last two cuecas analysed here ('La Enredadera' [2010] and 'La Enredadera' [2013]) are not available online, so mp3 files are attached.

## Example N° 1: La Japonesa

*Background*

'La Japonesa' is an old zamacueca of unknown author that was brought back to public attention in the late nineteenth century by Spanish guitarist Francisco Alba when he published a score ca. 1890 (Izquierdo König, Jordán González and Torres Alvarado 2016, 145). I chose to begin with this example as it constitutes the oldest audible document available of the cueca, recorded in 1906 (**version 1**). Originally as a wax cylinder recording, it was reissued on a CD by researchers Juan Astica, Carlos Martínez and Paulina Sanhueza in their book *Los discos 78 de la música popular chilena* (1997).[99] The original track is part of a broader process of proliferation of cylinder recordings that started in 1905, focusing on folkloric, ballroom and lyrical repertoires (González and Rolle 2005, 181). From then and up to the mid-1920s, 'the recording system was acoustic (…) [producing] recordings of low dynamic range response as well as instrumental sound frequency,' implying that the most adequate instrument was the voice, which had to possess 'volume, harmonic richness and the ability of sustaining notes,' hence privileging tenors, baritones and sopranos for the recording industry of the time (183).

In the 1920s there was a rise of folk-roots music bands inspired on the *huaso* archetype,[100] such as *Los Guasos de Chincolco*, founded in 1921 by Jorge Martínez and Julio Cartagena, and a year later incorporating Fernando and Guillermo Montero, constituting thus 'the first huaso quartet of discographic trajectory' (375), and who are the interpreters of **version 2**, recorded ca. 1927.[101]

Jan Fairley (1984) discusses the folkloric boom that took place in Latin America during the 1950s and 1960s, and which would grow into the Nueva Canción movement. Factors for this boom are many. Firstly, due to the mass-availability of music, especially from the US, that began with the rise of commercial radio and recording industries in the 1950s, local cultural policies in Latin American countries attempted to make sure that a

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[99] As can be understandable with regards to the reconstitution of a very old cylinder recording, the sound quality of this track is only as good as it can be, and many aspects of it are not audible, such as lyrics and hence poetic form. That said, as the purpose of this analysis is to build a stylistic history of a genre encompassing over a century of music, analysis will tend to be focused preferentially in certain aspects, as explained above.

[100] See glossary.

[101] This track was reissued on a CD in 2007 by Carlos Martínez as a follow up of his earlier project mentioned above, named *Los Guasos de Chincolco (1921-193…). Restauración de grabaciones en discos de acetato de 78 revoluciones por minuto*, and made available through the music archive *Cancionerodecuecas.cl*.

considerable proportion (50% in Argentina, 30% in Chile) of the music available was nationally produced. In Chile, in 1936 the *Escuelas de Temporada* (Season Schools) of Universidad de Chile were inaugurated, with the participation of, among others, Emilia Garnham (1948), Margot Loyola (1949), Raquel Barros (1952) and Violeta Parra (1954)[102] (Spencer, 2011b). On the other hand, in 1944 the Institute of Musical Folklore Research was annexed to the Arts Faculty of Universidad de Chile, which, according to González and Rolle, favoured 'a new mediatisation of traditional music: that realised from academia' (2005, 409). And furthermore, the *Primer Congreso de Poetas y Cantores Populares de Chile* (First Congress of Popular Poets and Singers of Chile) took place in 1952. In the light of the Cold war and an unsettled international political climate they discussed, among other things, 'the [political] role of the popular poet and his poetry' (Fairley 1984, 110), motivating several Chilean artists and groups to deepen their knowledge and performance of these, at that time little known, local folkloric expressions. Thus, figures like Margot Loyola, Violeta Parra, Gabriela Pizarro and her husband Héctor Pavez, along with folk groups like *Millaray* or *Cuncumén* emerged to develop a bridge between academia and peasant folklore. Violeta Parra started her own path of countryside fieldwork in 1953. Before that she had been interpreting folk music as many other artists in the Chilean urban music scene with her sister Hilda, forming the *Hermanas Parra* duet in 1947. **Version 3** is framed within this process of moving back to peasant roots but from an academic context. It was collected by Violeta Parra in the field, and recorded with her sister Hilda; later on, it would be included in this EMI Odeon compilation 'A bailar cueca!' from 1964.

[102] See the discussion of the significance of the historical role women have held in Chilean *popular* music traditions in chapter 6.

*Table 4.1*

| LA JAPONESA | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Version** | **Version 1** | **Version 2** | **Version 3** |
| **Author** | Folklore | Folklore | Folklore |
| **Interpreters** | Unknown | Los Guasos de Chincolco | Las Hermanas Parra |
| **Album** | Unknown | Unknown | *A bailar cueca!* |
| **Year** | 1906 | 1927 | 1964 |
| **Instrumentation** | Soprano duet, piano, percussions | Huaso duet, piano | Piano, guitar, accordion, pandero (standard cueca formation since the 1940s), cantora duet |
| **Musical form** | ABB ABB ABB AB A | ABB ABB ABB ABB A | AABB AABB AABB A |
| **Poetic form** | Inaudible lyrics (but there seem to be seguidillas and not coplas) | Copla - seguidilla - copla - seguidilla - remate | Seguidilla - Seguidilla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate |
| **Key signature** | Ab major | A major | D major |
| **Harmony** | I-V-V-I | I-V-V-I | I-V-V-I |
| **Melodic range** | 9th | 9th | 9th |
| **Vocal Harmonisations** | Parallel thirds | Parallel thirds | Parallel thirds |
| **Singing style** | Singing off-beat | Stressing the downbeat | Singing off-beat |
| **Meter** | 6/8 | 6/8 | 6/8+3/4 (hemiola) |
| **Rhythmic features** | Irregular beating | Stable tempo, strong downbeat, feeling like a waltz rhythm | Irregular beating, faster rhythm |
| **Available from** | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/84 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/82 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/9 |

This first example features some of the oldest versions of cueca that are available in sound archives. Therefore, some of their formal features vary greatly because, as we will see later, there was a moment during the twentieth century—which probably has to do with the development of the radio and the recording industry—where the cueca's musical and poetic form became somewhat standardised. Hence, regarding musical form, **version 1** follows a typical cueca form of ABB ABB ABB AB A, which is the most common form today,[103] **version 2** slightly modifies it to ABB ABB ABB ABB A, and **version 3** completely changes it to that of AABB AABB AABB A. Similarly, in terms of poetic form, **version 1** is (apparently) composed by seguidillas, **version 2** is written in coplas and seguidillas and **version 3**, substitutes the coplas by seguidillas, going back to an older model. These variations might suggest that the three versions seem to have been collected from different sources and dates, as the form and lyrics vary while the melody remains practically the same.

[103] As we don't know the lyrics and the poetic structure, then we cannot infer whether this is the exact current ABBABB ABB AB A from, where the first half would be constituted by the copla, the following to by the seguidillas and the last one by the remate. It might be the case, however, as with many cuecas of that period, that this cueca was actually written in seguidillas. Although I cannot hear the exact lyrics, the number of syllables appear to be distinguishable, through which I would infer that the cueca was written in seguidillas and not coplas.

The three versions are in major key, with the harmonic accompaniment alternating between tonic and dominant every two measures throughout the whole song, as is typical of the genre. Also in all cases, vocal melody develops in a wide melodic range of nine scale degrees. Moreover, in the three versions, the singing duets split the melodic line singing in parallel thirds, which is a widespread usage in the practice of cueca singing.

Regarding rhythmic features, the metre in **Version 1** feels like a 6/8 of a very irregular tempo, while **Version 2** exhibits a much steadier 6/8 waltz rhythm in a slower tempo, perhaps due to the strong downbeat marked by the piano throughout the tune. **Version 3** follows the typical 6/8+3/4 cueca rhythm—constituting the *Hemiola* or *Sesquiáltera*, so familiar to many forms of Latin American music—with a swung feel to it and in a much faster tempo.

An essential difference between these versions, which might mark a precedent for the cueca style developments to come, is the melodic phrasing. While in the first case the sopranos tend to sing off-beat, frequently starting the melody a quaver before the downbeat, in **version 2** the male duet appears rigorously stressing each downbeat (see Fig. 4.4). In **version 3** the melodic rhythm is particularly syncopated, with phrases tending to start a quaver or semi-quaver before the downbeat, resembling the first example, and situating them both in a similar phrasing style (see Figures 4.3 and 4.5), which will be frequently heard in Violeta Parra's repertoire, thus demonstrating her interest on the traditional cantora referent.

It can be observed how the style shown in **version 3** had little to do with the more classical-music approach of the two earlier versions. The sound of the piano resembles much of the sound we hear today in the cuequero piano, and the presence of the pandero marks a significant stylistic advancement, achieved some decades earlier, to which I will refer in more detail in a later example. A traditionalist peasant style reproduction is evident in certain aspects of this version, such as the high pitch reached in the exclamation '**hui**fa ay ay ay!' (Fig. 4.5), which can be heard in many interpretations of old peasant songs today, and also in sound recordings since 1924 (Fig. 4.6).

As noted above, the application of different lyrics to the same melody has been a common practice throughout Hispanic-American music-poetic traditions. As much of this folkloric repertoire belongs to oral tradition, it is common to find parts of different ancient poems reunited in new versions. In the case of **version 3**, for example, only after a short Google inquiry I found two versions, one was an Andalusian *bulería*, and a traditional

*huasteco* song (Mexico) dated from the eighteenth century with roughly the same lyrics, though with local idiom variations (Fig. 4.2).

*Figure 4.2*

**CIENTO CINCUENTA PESOS**

*Andalusian version (FATUM, Rosario la Tremendita, Spotify)*

Ciento cincuenta pesos
daba la viuda
solo por la sotana
del señor cura

y el cura le responde
con gran contento
mi sotana se vende
conmigo dentro

Y la viuda le responde
Con alegría
Esa era la sotana
La que quería

*Cielito Lindo (Tradicional Huasteca) CNDM: UNIVERSO BARROCO. AUDITORIO NACIONAL DE MÚSICA*

Ciento cincuenta pesos
daba una viuda,
pa' que le pongan cuernos *(Cielito Lindo)*
al señor cura.

Se los pusieron,
y como era viejito, *(Cielito Lindo)*
se le cayeron.

Ciento cincuenta pesos, *(Cielito Lindo)*
daba una viuda,
solo por la sotana, *(Cielito Lindo)*
de cierto cura.

Y el cura le responde
con gran contento,
que no da la sotana
si él no va adentro.

*Chilean versión (La Japonesa, Zamacueca)*

/: Ciento cincuenta pesos
me han ofrecido *(ay sí)* :/
/: Porque le ponga el gorro
y a mí marido *(huifa ay ay ay)* :/

/: Ciento cincuenta pesos
me han ofrecido *(ay sí)* :/
/: Porque le ponga el vuelo
y a mí vestido *(huifa ay ay ay)* :/

/: Ciento cincuenta pesos
daba una viuda *(ay sí)* :/
/: Por la sotana abierta
del señor cura *(huifa ay ay ay)* :/

Hácele, hácele, hácele,
chilena, hácele.

*Figure 4.3*

## La Japonesa (1906)

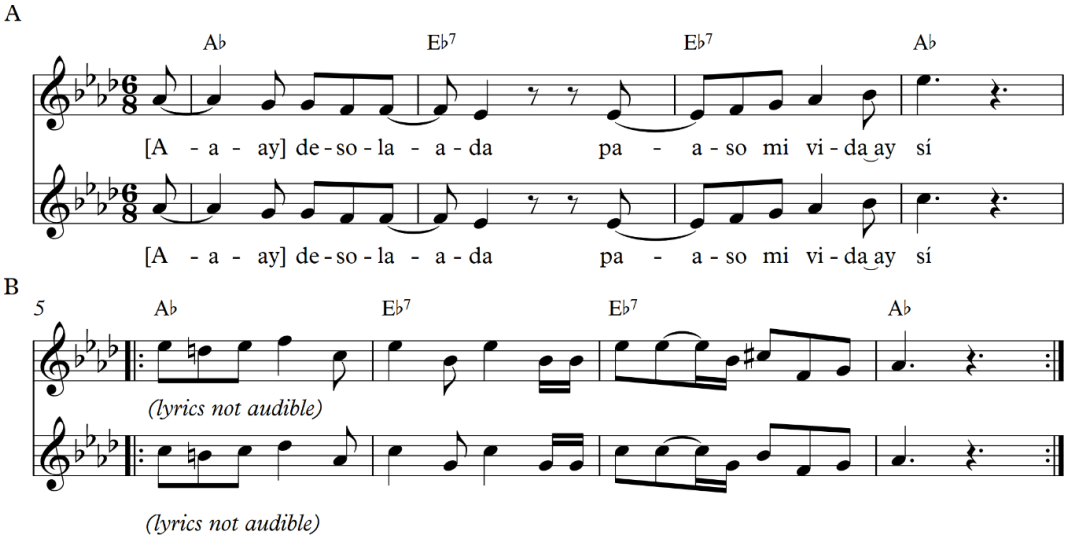



*Figure 4.4*

## La Japonesa (1927)

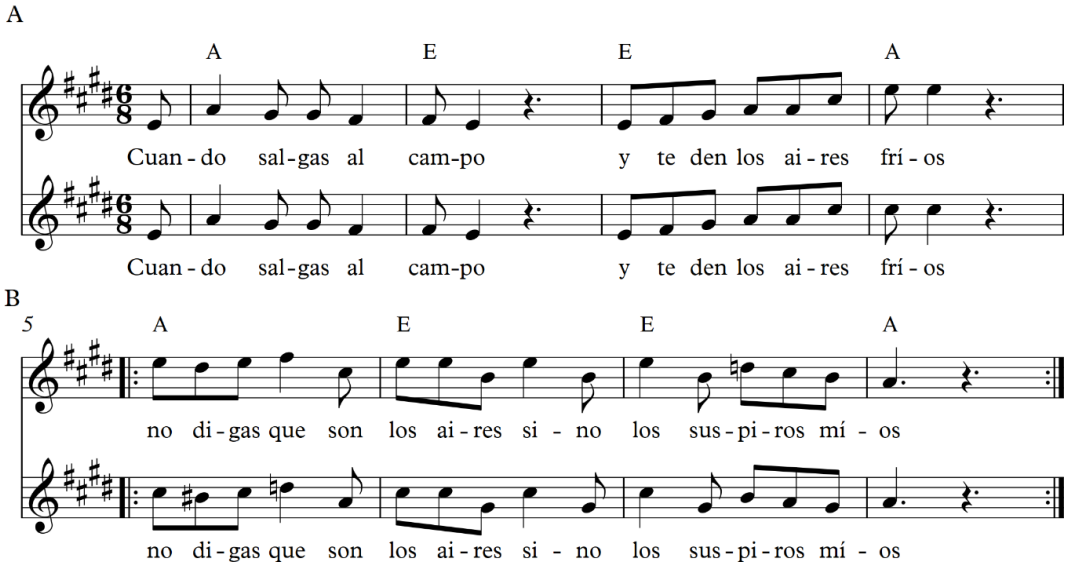
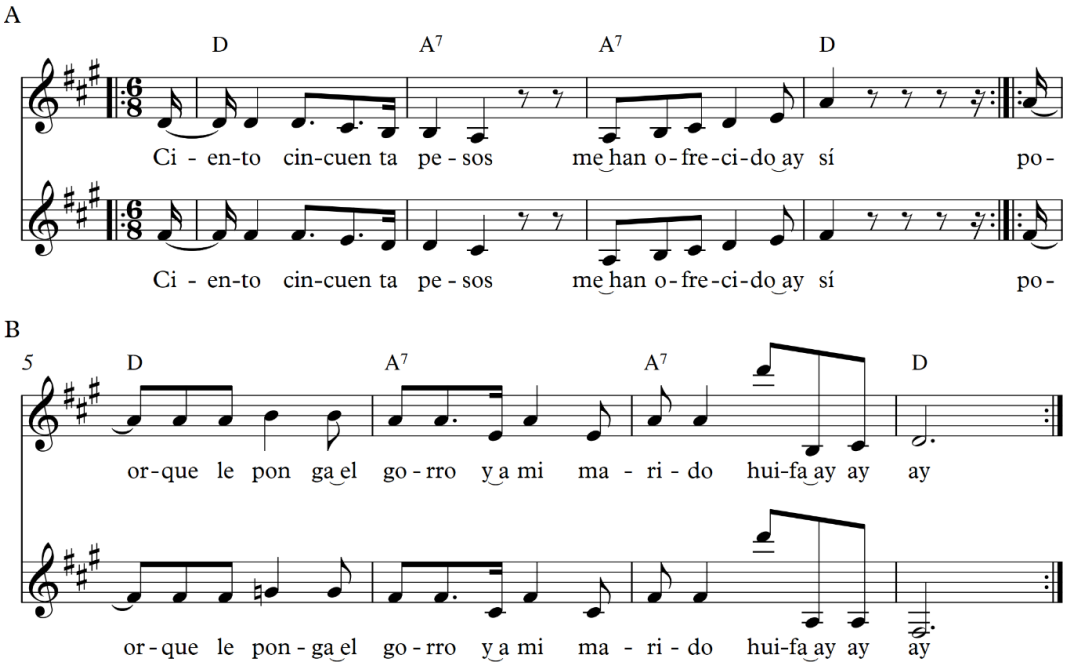


*Figure 4.5*

# La Japonesa (150 pesos - 1964)



## Example N° 2: Corazones Partidos

*Background*

'Corazones partidos' is an *aire de cueca chilena* composed by the Argentineans Saúl Salinas (lyrics) and José Razzano (music), and its first recorded version (**version 1**) was performed by the also Argentinean *Dúo Ruíz-Acuña* in 1924. I chose this example for two reasons. Firstly, it reflects much of the cultural exchange between particular provinces of Argentina (especially Cuyo) and Chile, through which one can also relate to the broader context of the zamacueca matrix that is present through several Latin American countries. This cueca continued to be interpreted and recorded in both sides of the Andes with great popularity until at least the 1960s—in Argentina until the 1980s. Secondly, I chose this example as I was able to find three other versions of similar periods, whose musical diversity accounts for the fecundity of the folk-related musical movements of the 1960s in Chile, as well as the different models of the female cantora.

**Version 2** was recorded by the female duet *Las Dos Alicias*, and later included in the 1964 compilation *A bailar cueca!* I would argue that this version exemplifies the persistence of the peasant referent of the cantora in the urban scene, still with a somewhat modest vocal interpretation and performance, and sticking to some of the most traditional cueca instruments.

**Version 3** is performed by *Los Cuatro Hermanos Silva*, a group of siblings who began their musical career in 1945, and who were dedicated to Chilean and later Latin American folklore. The group stands as part of the Huaso tradition that started in the 1920s, where they would collect folkloric repertoires from the countryside and then bring them to the city to produce urban re-interpretations. In this case, for the first time, a female voice was included in a huaso formation. This was an important innovation for the time, which led to the proliferation of the typical cueca groups in the 50s and 60s where the traditional cantora would become an artistic singer, of a refined vocal placement and a studied performative attitude, surrounded by male voices and instruments—with Ester Soré and Silvia Infantas as emblematic cases. The Hermanos Silva went on several international tours before they established themselves in Mexico in 1957, where they continued their prolific career in Latin American folklore and *popular* music.

**Version 4** is a very particular one, as it belongs, according to González, Ohlsen and Rolle (2009), to a trend initiated by *Los Cuatro Cuartos* (1963-1966) folk group—whose female version was the group we are analysing here, *Las Cuatro Brujas* (1964-

1966)—named *neofolklore*. As mentioned above, already in the 1950s a folkloric boom had started to take shape, and by the 1960s there was an extraordinary folkloric effervescence, of which these groups were the first revelations (350). Neofolklore began as an attempt to move away from the priorities of the industrialised creole groups, in order to attain creative freedom that would allow for the recuperation of lost Chilean folk genres—such as *refalosa*, *sirilla*, *rin*, *pericona*, etc.—and their renovation, along with the current ones—mainly cueca and *tonada*[104] (338-339). The result was an abundant repertoire of new compositions as well as original re-arrangements of old songs, all with the touch of the modernised creative spirit of a young generation who wanted to move forward. Among this generation, some musicians strongly engaged with social discourses, and, notwithstanding their importance at neofolklore's rising stages, they found their most adequate musical and social movement in the nueva canción, which would emerge shortly after. Examples are Rolando Alarcón, Víctor Jara, Patricio Manns, Violeta Parra, her son Ángel and her daughter Isabel. As we will see, this version thus stands out among the abundant cueca production of the 60s—one of the most productive decades for releases of new cueca recordings—as it moves away from the canonical style of the time to present a musically elaborate proposal.

[104] See glossary.

*Table 4.2*

| CORAZONES PARTIDOS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Version** | **Version 1** | **Version 2** | **Version 3** | **Version 4** |
| **Year** | 1924 | 1964 | 1964 | 1965 |
| **Author** | Saúl Salinas (L) and José Razzano (M) | Saúl Salinas (L) and José Razzano (M) | Saúl Salinas (L) and José Razzano (M) | Saúl Salinas (L) and José Razzano (M) |
| **Interpreters** | Dúo Ruíz Acuña | Las Dos Alicias | Los Cuatro Hermanos Silva | Las Cuatro Brujas |
| **Album** | Unknown | *A bailar cueca!* | *15 años, 15 países, 15 canciones* | *El retorno de las brujas* |
| **Instrumentation** | Tenor, guitars | Piano, guitar, pandero, cantora duet (standard cueca ensemble) | Harp, guitars, bell | 4-female-vocal choral singing, 2 guitars |
| **Musical form** | AABB AABB A (x2) | AABB AABB A (x2) | AABB AABB A (x2) | AABB AABB A (x2) |
| **Poetic form** | Seguidilla - seguidilla - remate (x2) | Seguidilla - seguidilla - remate (x2) | Seguidilla - seguidilla - remate (x2) | Seguidilla - seguidilla - remate (x2) |
| **Key signature** | C major | Gb major | F major | Multiple |
| **Harmony** | I-V-V-I | A: I-V-V-I<br>B: I-IV-V-I | A: I-V-V-I<br>B: I-IV-V-I | 3 modulations but basically same structure as others |
| **Melodic range** | 9th | 9th | 9th | 9th |
| **Vocal Harmony** | Soloist | Parallel thirds | Female soloist, male vocals (octave or three parallel harmonisations) | Choral singing and modulations |
| **Singing style** | Slightly syncopated | Slightly syncopated | Marked dynamic changes | Marked dynamic changes |
| **Metre** | ¾ | 6/8 | 6/8 (3/8 feel) | 6/8 |
| **Rhythm** | Fast, regular beating | Fast, regular beating | Regular beating | Strictly regular beating (choral singing) |
| **Available from** | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/84 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/9 | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sqnh0lYoueY | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1YIu-vFjydI |

In the four versions the musical form is different from the common cueca form, consisting of a repetition of AABB AABB A. This division of the song into two parts is very typical of the Argentinean *cueca cuyana*, as well as related genres such as the *zamba* or the *chacarera*, which 'evidences the kinship of Southern Cone genres that are bound together by the *zamacueca* matrix' (González and Rolle 2005, 399). Also, in all versions, the poetic form consists of two seguidillas followed by a remate, and then the same pattern again.

The harmonic accompaniment is overall the same in the four versions, favouring an alternation between tonic and dominant every two measures throughout the song. However, each one of the newer versions adds new tonal functions that increase harmonic complexity. **Versions 2** and **3** add a subdominant chord, and **version 4** constitutes a *sui generis* case as it presents several modulations. It starts with an *acapella* choral introduction of four voices who sing the phrase A. They interestingly incorporate more

complex harmonic arrangements than what is usual in the genre, modulating two times in just one musical phrase[105] (Fig. 4.9a). After the introduction, the song features a dynamic four-part choral arrangement with one leading voice mostly singing the main melodic line, and the rest making rhythmic and harmonic variations that result in several modulations throughout the song[106] (Fig. 4.9b).

In all four cases, vocal melody features a melodic range of an octave plus a tone. In **version 1** we note again the high pitch reached in the exclamation '**hui**fa ay ay ay!' (Fig. 4.6), which can be found in many traditional songs of Chile and Latin America. In **version 2,** the two female singers sing the melody in thirds (roughly) with practically no harmonic variations, which is the typical usage of the cantora. In this case, the exclamation 'huifa ay ay ay!' is organically included in the melody—rather than shouted in a high pitch, as in previous examples (Fig. 4.7). In **version 3,** the lead singer is a woman (Olimpia Silva). Her two brothers also sing, sometimes an octave lower, or at times making three voice harmonisations revealing calculated variations in the dynamics.

The melodic rhythm in **versions 1** and **2** is only slightly syncopated, with the melody starting, at certain points, a quaver or semiquaver before the downbeat. The melodic rhythm in **versions 3** and **4**, on the other hand, is steadier and markedly on-beat, with most melodic beginnings coinciding with the downbeat, probably due to their higher harmonic and rhythmic complexity.

Regarding rhythmic features, while **version 1** is in a 3/4 meter, in a quite regular, fast tempo, **versions 2, 3** and **4** appear to be in 6/8. **Version 2** develops in quite a regular, fast tempo, with a somewhat heavy texture given by the permanent presence of piano, guitar and pandero all through the song. **Version 3** presents a 6/8 meter which I would argue feels like 3/8, in quite a regular tempo, stressed by a sort of 'metronomic' bell in every downbeat. **Version 4** exhibits a rigorously regular tempo as might be required in choral music.

The paradigmatic change between the peasant cantora and the *cantante escénica* or artistic singer can be clearly observed in **version 3**, where the peasant referent would

[105] The song begins in F major, then it changes to Bb minor to finally arrive at D major, which is the key signature of the song –though there will still be some more modulations as the tune develops (Fig. 4.9a).
[106] It starts from a key signature of D major, and through the first seguidilla and half of the second one (AABB AA) it sticks to the typical I-V-V-I form (D-A7) in the A phrases, and I-IV-V-I in the B phrases – just like in **versions 2** and **3**. It then modulates to G major briefly (B), and then to C major (B), to finally arrive at D major again, for the remate (the final A) (Fig. 4.9b).

be stylised through performance and more complex musical arrangements, as well as the technically placed voice of the lead singer. In **version 4** this paradigmatic change is taken to an extreme, where, what before constituted a refinement of the peasant referent appears now as an abstraction with an innovative musical and performative proposal.[107]

[107] A thorough historical overview of the cantora in Latin America and in Chile can be read in chapter 6.

*Figure 4.6*

## Corazones partidos (1924)

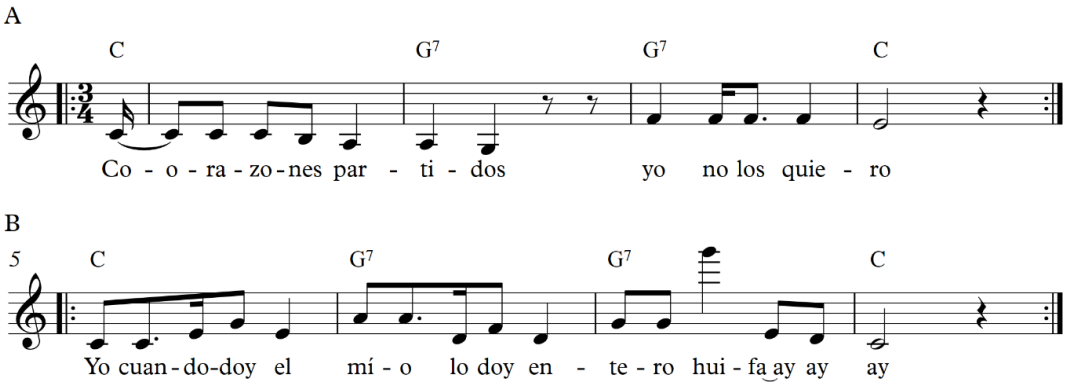



*Figure 4.7*

## Corazones partidos (1964)

Las Dos Alicias

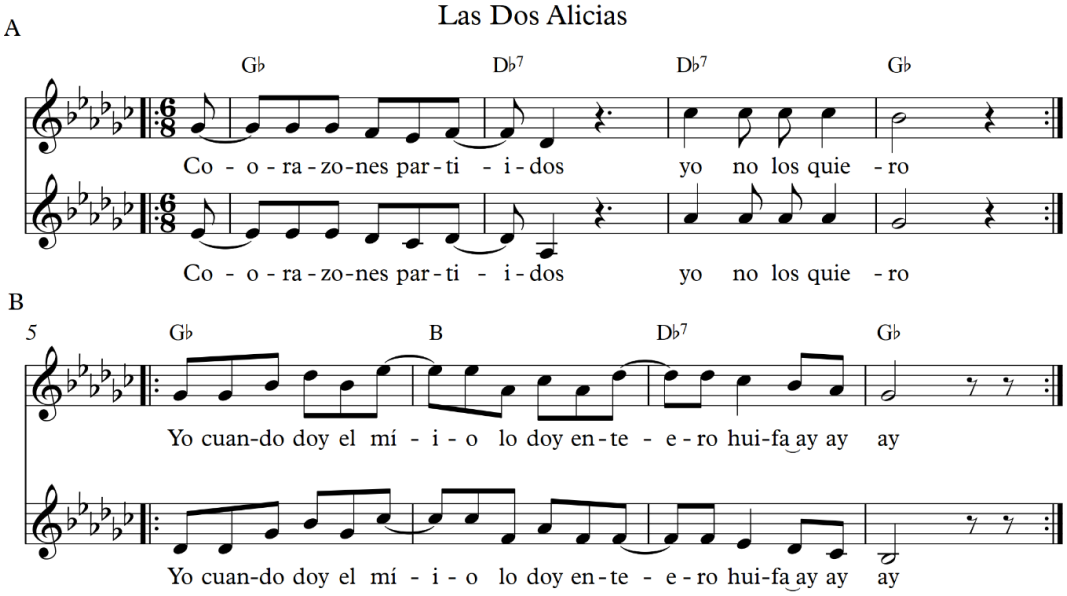


*Figure 4.8*

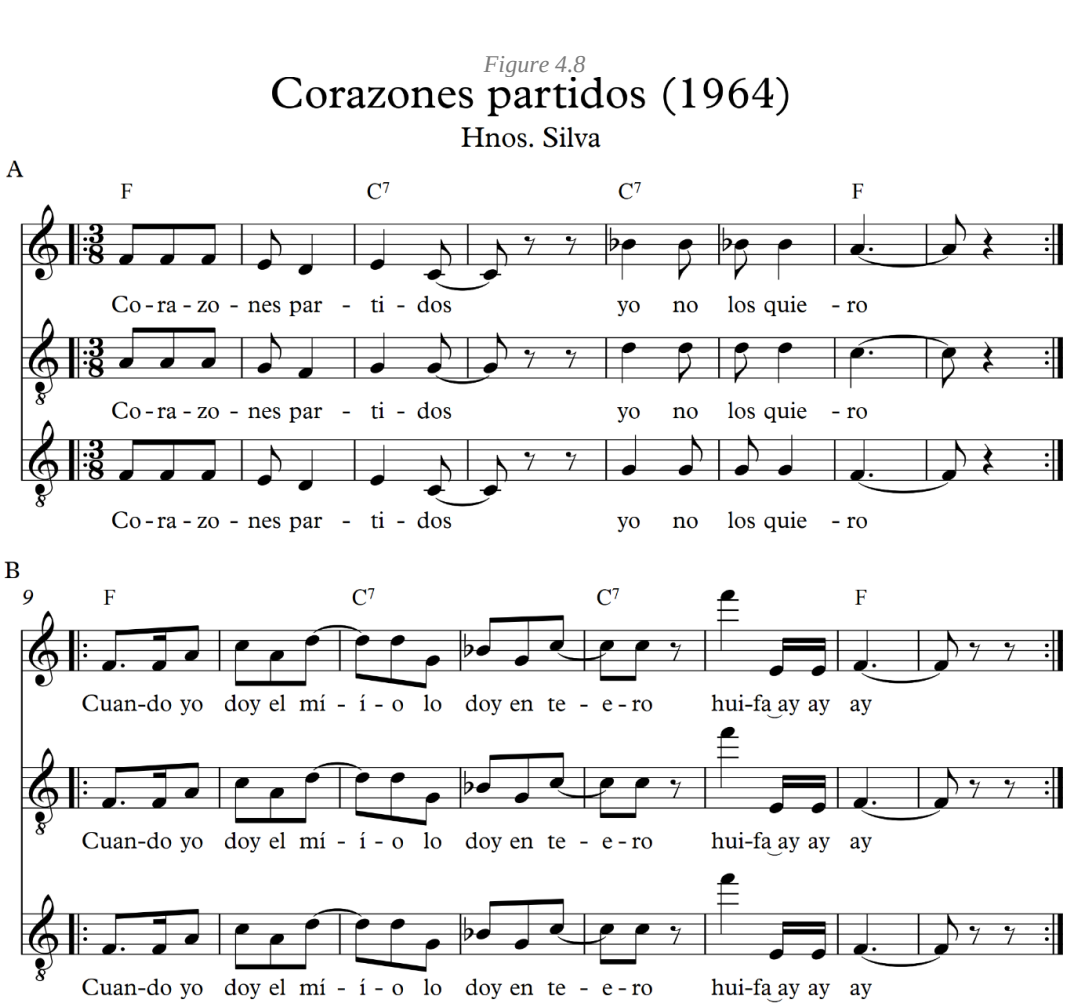



*Figure 4.9a*

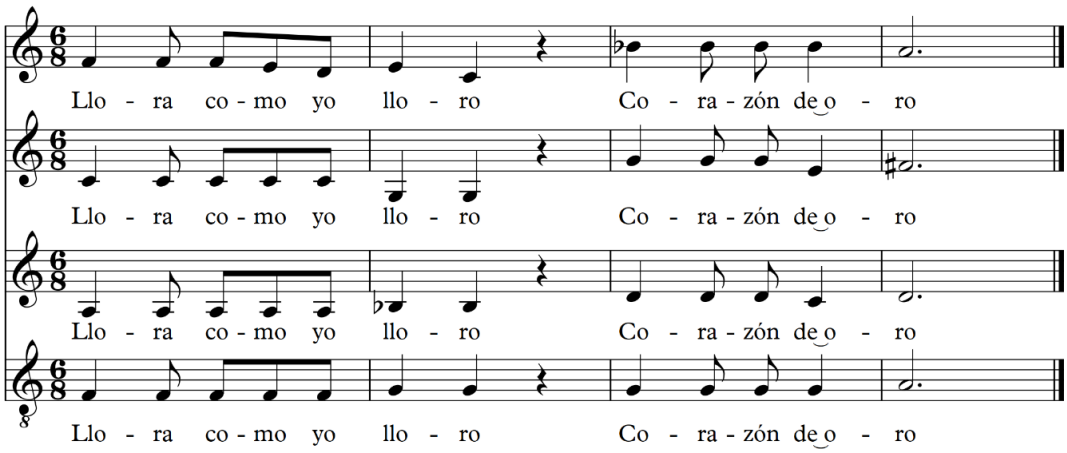
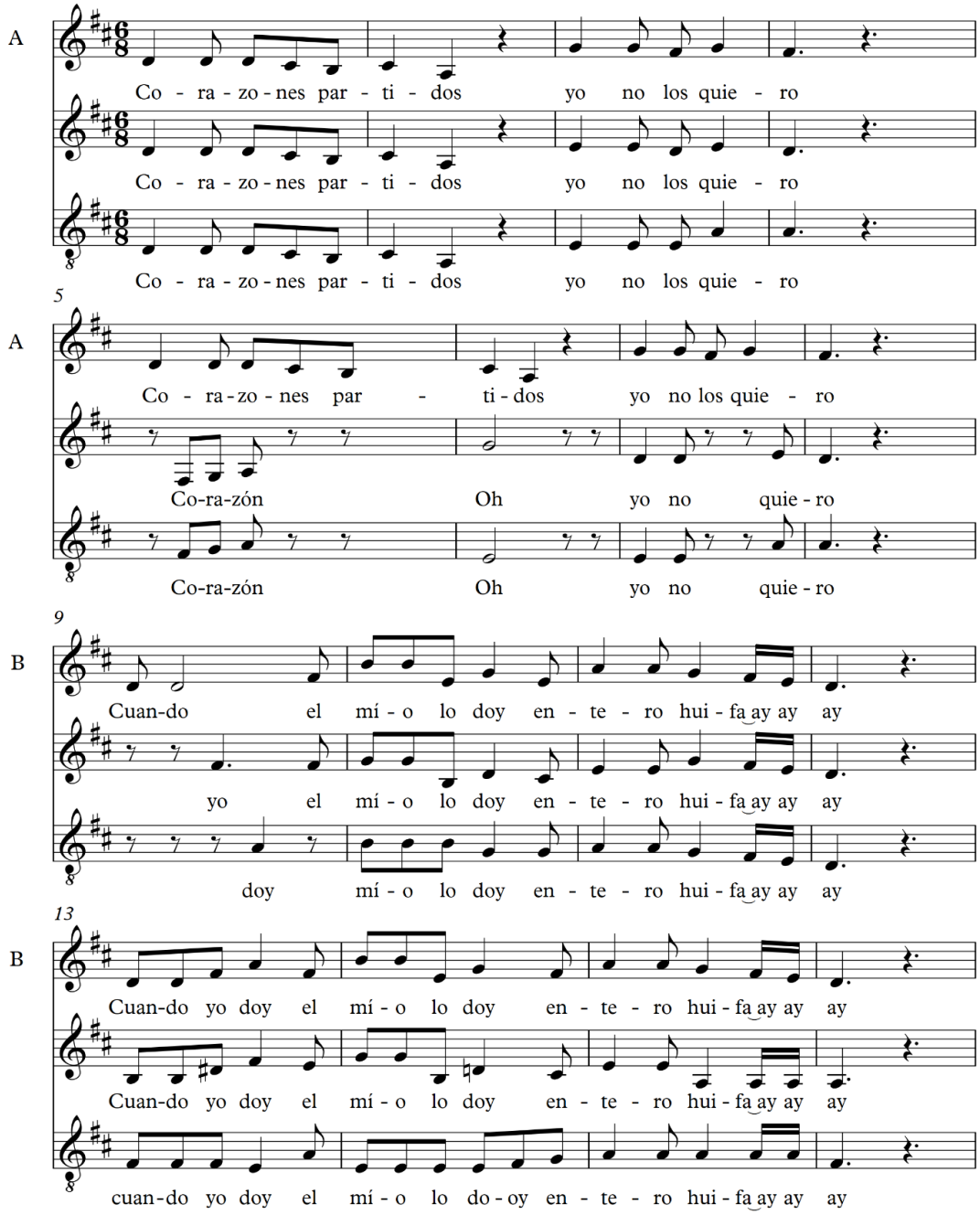


*Figure 4.9b*

# Corazones partidos (1965)

Las Cuatro Brujas



## Example N° 3: Chicha[108] de Curacaví

*Background*

This has been, for at least half a century, one of the most famous cuecas in Chile. The song was written by Petronila Orellana (1885-1963), a famous cantora whose compositions have been largely disseminated throughout Chile until today, and who used to run one of the last *casas de canto*[109] in Santiago (González and Rolle 2005, 372). I chose this example for three main reasons: firstly because **version 1** constitutes one of the first recordings to feature the pandero, which is a small hexagonal membranophone similar to the tambourine whose usage has been prominent in the cueca throughout the twentieth century. Although its presence in Chilean social life has been largely documented since the nineteenth century (68), this is probably one of the first times it was recorded. One can speculate that this might be due to the technical conditions of the audio systems in those years.[110] Isabel Fuentes, founder of *Las Morenitas* (1954-), a cantora who has been active in the urban folk scene since 1949, told me that according to her memories of the times when she was playing for the famous group *Los Provincianos* (1938-1966), the first time someone played the pandero in a cueca was in 1940, by a musician called 'Chico Rozas' (personal communication, 16th March 2018). Secondly, I chose this cueca example because some of its versions evidence the presence of an urban-popular variant in the cueca, which can be seen especially in **versions 3** (*Los Perlas*) and **4** (Los Chileneros). Finally, being a very wide-spread cueca until today, and having been recorded numerous times, this cueca provides the possibility of finding five quite dissimilar versions in terms of period and style thus allowing for rich comparative analysis.

**Version 1** was recorded in 1946, in a record that marked a significant milestone for the history of cueca in Chile: it was the year when the 78 rpm disc format was extended to five minutes, allowing to record three cuecas on each side, which is the 'traditional

[108] The word *chicha* refers to a typical Chilean grape liquor.

[109] *Casas de canto* were taverns or brothels located in working-class neighbourhoods, most generally hosted by women, which functioned roughly from the late nineteenth century through to the first half of the twentieth century. It was characterised by featuring live musicians performing cuecas and other sorts of urban-popular music until dawn.

[110] On this regard, the director of the cueca archive cancionerdecuecas.cl, Felipe Solis, has told me that 'due to the sound range of the microphones (acoustic before 1925 and electrical after this date) and the reproduction equipment (Victrola), it is possible that its use in the studio was limited since the sonic field of the pandero was very [pervasive]. It goes through all the microphones now, but maybe at that time the range of kHz could not be heard or could be heard with an altered timbre' (personal communication, 6 March 2018).

performative unit of the Chilean cueca' (403). This version is interpreted by Raúl Gardy and *Las Huasas Andinas*.

**Version 2** is sung by *Los Hermanos Lagos*—a huaso trio of brothers that follows a tradition first imposed by Los Guasos de Chincolco—who started their music trajectory in the 1940s, where several groups of siblings where likewise carrying out their careers in the context of the ballrooms, *estudiantinas*, and *casas de canto* (González and Rolle 2005, 383).

**Version 3** is interpreted by Los Perlas, a cueca group formed by Luis Silva and Óscar Olivares in 1955. This is a memorable cueca group especially because of their emphasis on a fabricated *roto*—Chilean *popular* subject—identity where they would mostly pursue a humorous performance to engage their audience. Besides their work as musicians, the group had significant influence over the youth in the *popular* music scene of the time through their magazine *El Musiquero* (1964-1976). Though these singers constitute a memorable referent of the urban-popular cueca—the one related to the figure of the roto—it is worth noting that this reference was not a reflection of their own socio-cultural backgrounds but rather an identity they sought to represent through calculated performative mechanisms, such as comic sketches at the beginning of the songs or the conversational singing style, both of which depicted the urban-popular character of the roto.

**Version 4** is interpreted by Los Chileneros, known as the founding group of the urban-popular cueca tradition, better known as *cueca brava* or *cueca chilenera*, a style of cueca that developed in the early twentieth century in the industrial neighbourhoods of Santiago and Valparaíso. There are extensive theories and historical (and mythical) accounts on this tradition—which relates to marginal social groups and the roto archetype, as well as the tradition of *canto a la rueda*.[111] For now, it is pertinent to establish that this cueca style, though present (albeit in a latent state) in the Chilean recording industry since the 1950s, was only recorded on LP in 1967, and their success had quite a short life until 1973, when the 'cultural blackout'—as the decline and repression of artistic and cultural development caused by Pinochet's dictatorship was generally referred to—took place. After the referendum and consequent return to democracy, in 1990, a cueca revival process slowly began to emerge, and the main musical and cultural referent for this

[111] See glossary for definition.

movement, which today enjoys of its total splendour, is the cueca chilenera (more generally known as urban-popular cueca).

**Version 5** is sung by the duet *Las Consentidas*, formed in 1962 by Inés Sotelo (former participant of the well-known *Dúo María-Inés*) and Claudia Martínez. Though this was recorded much later than the previous four, one can still observe certain patterns related to the tradition of the urban-creole cueca, which saw its golden years during the 1950s and 1960s.

## *Comparative analysis*

*Table 4.3*

| CHICHA DE CURACAVÍ | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Version** | **Version 1** | **Version 2** | **Version 3** | **Version 4** | **Version 5** |
| **Author** | Petronila Orellana | Petronila Orellana | Petronila Orellana | Petronila Orellana | Petronila Orellana |
| **Interpreters** | Raúl Gardy y Las Huasas Andinas | Los Hermanos Lagos | Los Perlas | Los Chileneros | Las Consentidas |
| **Album** | *Raúl Gardy y Las Huasas Andinas* | *Esta sí que es fiesta mi alma* | *Las mejores cuecas del mundo* | *La cueca centrina* | *Sáquense los guantes y arriba las palmas* |
| **Year** | 1946 | 1964 | 1966 | 1967 | 1978 |
| **Instrumentation** | Piano, guitar, pandero, cantora trio, accordion, cantor duet | Harp, double-bass, pandero, piano, accordion, guitar, *platos*[112] male duet | Accordion, platos, pandero, piano, male duet. | Piano, pandero, accordion, guitars, double-bass, male quartet | Drum kit, accordion, pandero, electric bass, cantora duet |
| **Musical form** | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A |
| **Poetic form** | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla – remate |
| **Key signature** | D major | E major | E major | F# major | D major |
| **Harmony** | V-I-I-V | A: V-I-V/V-V B: V-I-I-V | A: V-I-V/V-V B: V-I-I-V | A: V-I-V/V-V B: V-I-I-V | A: V-I-V/V-V B: V-I-I-V |
| **Melodic range** | 7th | 6th | 6th | 7th | 6th |
| **Vocal Harmony** | Parallel thirds (there is a reference to canto a la rueda) | Parallel thirds | Lead singer varies the melody in opening sections, vocals double the melody (unison) | canto a la rueda | Parallel thirds |
| **Singing style** | Syncopated, off-beat melodic beginnings | Highly syncopated | Slow, regular tempo | Highly syncopated | Syncopated |
| **Metre** | 6/8 | 6/8+3/4 (hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (hemiola) |
| **Rhythm** | Irregular, 'swung' beating | Irregular beating, triplet subdivisions in the melody | Slow, regular beating | Irregular, fast beating, emphasis on quavers 2-3 and 5-6 | Prominent rhythmic section, regular beating |
| **Available from** | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/86 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/8 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/17 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/19 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/67 |

All five versions feature the most common cueca form today, consisting of ABBABB ABB AB A, while also obeying the currently most accepted poetic form which comprises one copla, followed by two seguidillas and one remate. It is worth noting that at a certain point during the 1940s the cueca became standardised, and the musical and poetic forms just described became the most (if not the only) accepted ones for the genre.

[112] *Platos* are small coffee plates that were typically played as castanets.

Additionally, all versions are in major key, with the tonic alternating with the dominant every two measures throughout the song, with the only difference of it starting and ending in the dominant chord, following a V-I-I-V form, which some regard as the typical quality of the cueca that 'does not resolve.' **Versions 2**, **3**, **4** and **5** will add the secondary dominant in every A phrase, which is a common harmonic embellishment (Figs. 4.11, 4.12, 4.13 and 4.14).

Regarding the singing style, in **version 1** the copla (ABBABB) is sung by the *Huasas Andinas* female trio in parallel thirds, alternating with two male singers, with Segundo Zamora singing the lead melodic line an octave lower, while Raúl Gardy accompanies him in a more disorganised vocal line, which would be roughly located a fourth above the leading melody. This speaks of the way cantores a la rueda would sing the cueca, with singers alternating by the four units that constitute the cueca (copla, seguidilla, seguidilla and remate). Because in this version there are both female and male singers, one can visualise both female models of a typical cantora duet, interacting with an incipient registration of the urban-popular cueca or cueca brava style, both featuring a syncopated melody with the downbeat being diffused with off-beat beginnings (Fig. 4.10).

In **version 2** the whole cueca is sung by a male duet in steady parallel thirds. The melodic rhythm is very syncopated, making it quite difficult to transcribe, not only anticipating the downbeats but also including triplet subdivisions (Fig. 4.11). This syncopated singing style is a reflection, as many of the previous examples, of a singing tradition that has not been 'domesticated' by written tradition and the score, but has instead remained within the field of the rural folk and the urban-popular music. We will see this oral-urban tradition in its maximum expression with the case of Los Chileneros.

In **version 3** the cueca is mostly sung by a male duet, though the entrance of each poetic verse (coplas, seguidillas, etc.) is only sung by the lead voice, in a sort of improvisatory (speech-like) manner, where he slightly modifies the melody. The melodic rhythm is quite steady, which reflects the theatrical craftiness of the interpretation.

**Version 4** features the canto a la rueda style. In this case, the *coplero* (the one who sings the copla) and *segundero* (the one who sings a second melodic line, separated from the first one by a third interval, as usual) start singing in quite a swung pace. As corresponds to the cueca brava convention, the coplero is then replaced by another cantor who resumes the leading vocals through the first seguidilla, who is then replaced by a

third cantor who sings the second seguidilla. Finally, the cueca returns to the cantor who sings the remate, who has also been shouting and singing animations all the song through. Segunderos also rotate in this manner.

In **version 5** the cantora duet sings in parallel thirds through the whole song, in quite a syncopated manner (Fig. 4.14); in this case, the rhythm of the instrumental accompaniment is steadier and more symmetric, due to the prominent rhythm section including the electric bass.

While **version 1** is in a 6/8 metre of quite an irregular-swung tempo, **versions 2**, **3**, **4** and **5** exhibit the typical 6/8+3/4 hemiola pattern throughout the song. I have found **version 4** particularly challenging to transcribe due to the overwhelming syncopation of melodic phrasing along with a firm emphasis on quavers 2-3 and 5-6 in an irregular, fast tempo, leaving quavers 1 and 4 almost unaccented (Fig. 4.13).

In terms of instrumentation, **version 5** stands out as it exhibits instruments that belong to a completely different musical universe, such as the drum kit and the electric bass. The song begins with a brief drum roll as a calling gesture for the song to start—quite the same as it used to be with the harp—until the accordion starts the melody, along with the drum kit, and shortly followed by the pandero and electric bass. The bass and accordion, in this case, constitute the harmonic base of the song, without noticeable guitars or piano, with a dense rhythmic texture which includes pandero and drum-kit, present all through the song. This marks the change of musical environment during the late 1970s and 1980s when imported rock music was gaining relevance in the Chilean political climate of dictatorship and a strong influence from the US popular music culture.[113]

[113] It is worth to note that in 1973 all public policies that aimed to favour national musical (general cultural) production were replaced by new commercially oriented and internationalist policies.

*Figure 4.10*

## Chicha de Curacaví (1946)

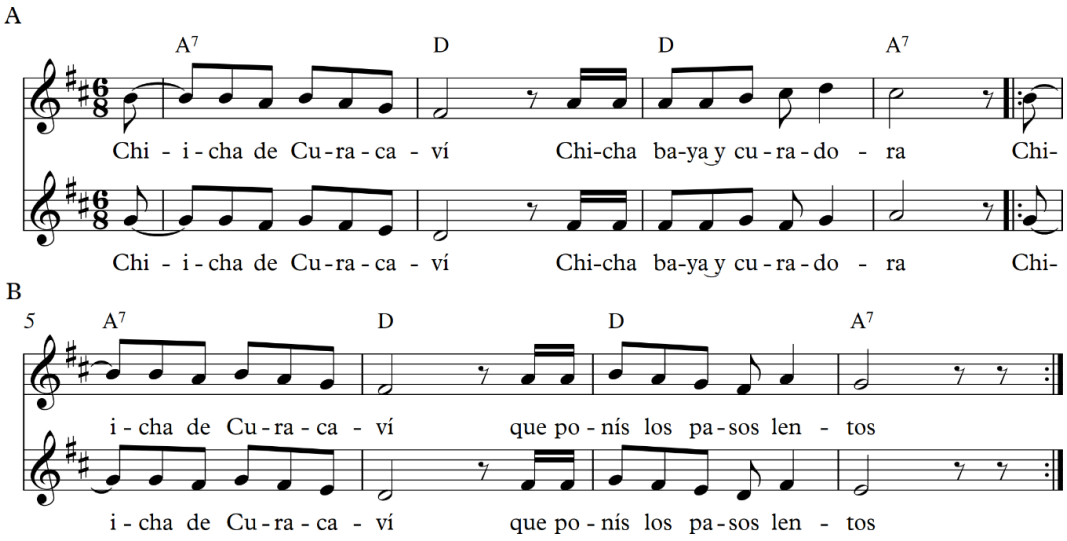



*Figure 4.11*

## Chicha de Curacaví (1964)

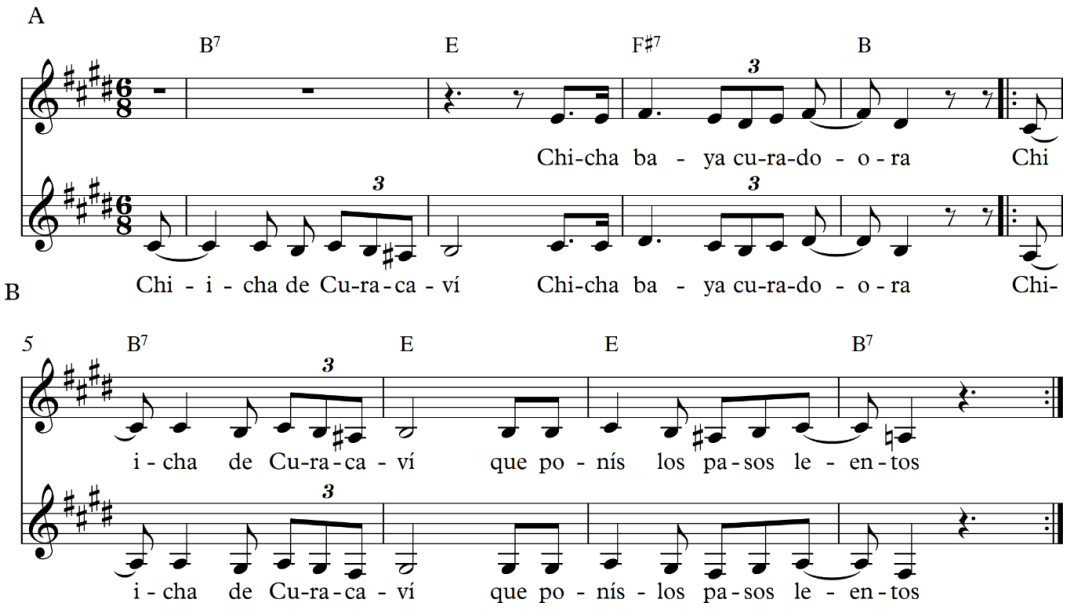


*Figure 4.12*

## Chicha de Curacaví (1966)

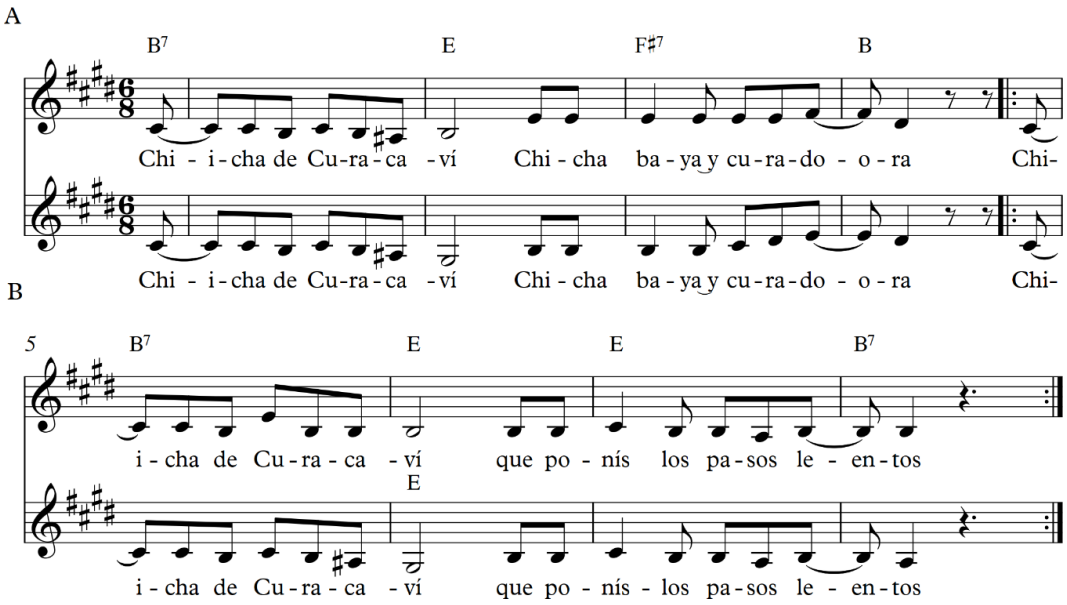



*Figure 4.13*

## Chicha de Curacaví (1967)

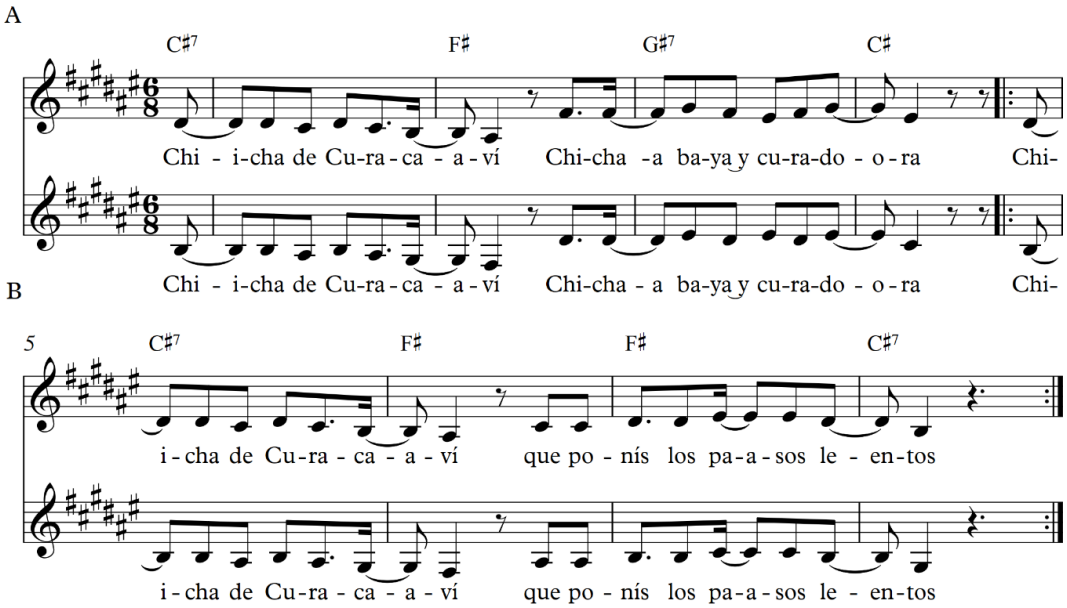
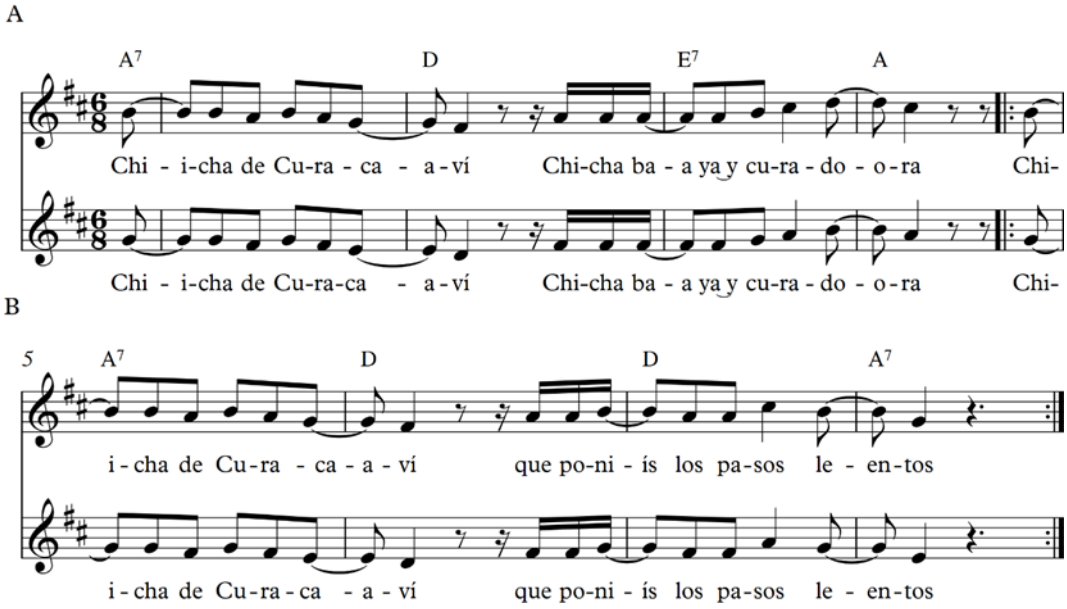


*Figure 4.14*

## Chicha de Curacaví (1978)



## Example N° 4: La Rosa Perdida

*Background*

'La Rosa Perdida' is a cueca written by Luis Alberto Azócar (aka Alberto Rey), which was interpreted by many cueca groups of the 50s, 60s and 70s, and whose melody is still applied today over other cueca lyrics, taken as a traditional melody, which is one of the reasons I chose it as an example.

Another important reason is that **version 1** of this example features the singer Mario Catalán, thus constituting one of the first appearances of urban-popular cantores from the environment of the cueca brava and canto a la rueda in the record industry, which as we will see was facilitated by the renowned *Dúo Rey-Silva*—who are also interpreters in this version. Rey-Silva was a famous, long-standing, prolific duo formed in 1935 by the same Alberto Rey (harp)—formerly a member of the group Los Guasos de Chincolco mentioned above—and Sergio Silva (guitar), who were very prominent in 'the folkloric spectacle, both *popular*[114] and aristocratic of the 1940s' (González and Rolle 2005, 382). It was Alberto Rey who adopted the Paraguayan Harp in Chile for the first time in the mid-1940s, which eventually replaced the Chilean harp until today.[115] It is important to note that these earlier male huaso groups had found their origins primarily within a rural high-class. However, Dúo Rey-Silva was more associated with middle and *popular* classes, and as such, they enabled the appearance of many *popular* musical traditions in the recording industry. Such is the case of the merchant from *La Vega*—a marginalised industrial neighbourhood in Santiago—Mario Catalán (1913-1979), who was first invited by the duo to record some cuecas of his authorship in 1951. Mario Catalán belongs to a tradition of urban-popular cueca that had only been transmitted orally, with no written record of it by any chroniclers or folklorists of the early twentieth century,[116] as opposed to the aristocratic rural cueca. This cueca would be later widely known as the cueca brava. Thus, with Mario Catalán, the Rey-Silva duo enabled the presence of this type of cueca in the record industry already in the 1950s. This presence was, however, partial, as Mario Catalán's tradition would be merged with that of the Rey-Silva duo, in which the harp, guitar and sophisticated singing style in thirds would become closer to a rural middle-

[114] My emphasis.
[115] According to what I have discussed with harpists Chabelita Fuentes and Diego Barrera, due to the larger size of the Paraguayan harp industry within the southern cone, it became increasingly cheaper to import harps from Paraguay than to produce them in Chile.
[116] An exception to this observation is that of Antonio Acevedo Hernández, who briefly refers to it in his book *La Cueca* (2014 [1953], 26).

class tradition. That said, the duo would continue their insistence on bringing the urban-popular cueca to the masses, an effort that would find its pinnacle in the recording of the production *Cuecas con escándalo* ('Cuecas with Fuss') in 1971, which gathered several urban-popular cueca groups to sing their repertoires.

**Version 2** is interpreted by *Dúo María-Inés*, in a record they published in collaboration with the Hermanos Lagos, also presented above in the cueca 'Chicha de Curacaví' (from the same album). Dúo María-Inés was formed in 1945 by María Venegas and Inés Sotelo—the latter of whom would later form the group Las Consentidas—and was active at the core of the Chilean music industry in the 1950s. The partnership between these two groups (Dúo María Inés and Hermanos Lagos) had been at play since 1951 when they worked together musicalizing the radio program *Esta es la fiesta chilena* ('This is the Chilean Fiesta'), and many of their recordings where subsequently compiled in the LP *Esta sí que es fiesta, mi alma* that features **version 2** (Solís Poblete n.d.). The male and female musical collaboration present here had already been noted in the 1946 recording of Raúl Gardy and the Huasas Andinas, presenting a new paradigmatic change in the stylistic history of cueca that would reach its highest expression during the 1960s. In this sense, **version 3** also represents said collaboration between renowned male and female folkloric groups of the 1960s, who in this case are *Dúo Leal-Del Campo* and Las Morenitas.

Dúo Leal-Del Campo was formed by Pedro Leal and Germán Del Campo, former members of *Los Baqueanos*, a trio where they participated with Hernán Arenas until 1960. Las Morenitas are a folk band led by Isabel (Chabelita) Fuentes, who has been a stable member since 1954. The formation at the time of this recording was probably with Alicia López—former member of *Las dos Alicias*—and Petronila (Petty) Salinas, though Isabel's is the only recognisable voice in this track. The group is one of the most long-lived Chilean folkloric groups, rendering visible the trajectory of the cantora archetype throughout the second half of the twentieth century, and constituting an inexorable source of traditional wisdom for contemporary cantoras and musicians today. Their current formation includes Isabel Fuentes (1954-), Laura Jentzen (1954-1960; 1995-), Fanny Flores (2000-) and Mily Ramírez (2010-).

*Table 4.4*

| LA ROSA PERDIDA | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Version** | **Version 1** | **Version 2** | **Version 3** |
| **Author** | Alberto Rey | Alberto Rey | Alberto Rey |
| **Interpreters** | Dúo Rey-Silva, Mario Catalán and Rafael Hermosilla's orchestra | Dúo María Inés and Hermanos Lagos | Dúo Leal-Del Campo and Las Morenitas |
| **Album** | *Dúo Rey-Silva, Mario Catalán y Orquesta de Rafael Hermosilla y Larry Godoy* | *Esta sí que es fiesta mi alma* | *El compadre Chaplin* |
| **Year** | 1954 | 1964 | 1968 |
| **Instrumentation** | Orchestral accompaniment: Brass and string sections, piano. Male duet (*Dúo Rey-Silva*), urban-popular cantor (Mario Catalán) and platos | Harp, claps, platos, pandero, piano, accordion, cantora duet (Dúo María Inés), male duet (Hermanos Lagos). | Accordion, guitar, pandero, tormento, male (huaso) duet, cantora trio |
| **Musical form** | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A |
| **Poetic form** | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla – remate | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate |
| **Key signature** | G major | E major | G major |
| **Harmony** | I-IV-V-I | I-IV-V-I | I-IV-V-I |
| **Melodic range** | 6th | 7th | 7th |
| **Vocal Harmony** | Male duet sings in parallel thirds, and alternate with soloist cantor | Parallel thirds | Parallel thirds |
| **Singing style** | Canto a la rueda | Female duet alternates with male duet. Slightly syncopated, more so by female duet. | Regular tempo, melody accentuates the downbeat |
| **Metre** | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) |
| **Rhythm** | Orchestra favours a regular tempo | | Regular tempo |
| Available from | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/96 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/8 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/29 |

In all three versions, the musical form is the again typical ABBABB ABB AB A, as well as the poetic structure (one copla, two seguidillas and one remate). These and some other examples that will follow reveal the tendency of standardising the musical and poetic form of the cueca in the recording industry at some point after the 1940s. All of them are in major key with harmonic accompaniments following a tonic-subdominant-dominant-tonic (I-IV-V-I) sequence.

Regarding the singing styles, in **version 1** the Rey-Silva duet start singing the first copla in parallel thirds, followed by Mario Catalán in the first seguidilla, exhibiting the peculiar nasal melismatic singing style where the urban-popular *cantor* would 'make use

of the resonators at the superior part of the face, to be able to expulse a high-pitched *whistle,*[117] provoking a sharp and penetrating sound' (Spencer 2011, 12). In the second seguidilla, the duet would sing again, with Catalán singing the last remate and the orchestra giving the cueca a dramatical end. This alternation between singers in each poetic section of the cueca speaks once again of the tradition of canto a la rueda. In **version 2** there is also an alternation between the female and the male duets, both in parallel thirds, until they all join together to finalise the song with the remate. The melodic rhythm is syncopated, more so in the case of the female duet (Fig. 4.16). In **version 3**, instead of an alternation between singers, there is a growth in texture, starting with the male duet singing in parallel thirds, and the rest of the singers gradually joining in with harmonisations as the song progresses. The melodic rhythm here is steady and constantly on the beat (Fig. 4.17). Vocal interpretation is in **versions 2** and **3** a result of the typical radial polished voice placement of the time, with hints of a rural imaginary.

In terms of instrumentation, **version 1** is accompanied by Rafael Hermosilla's Folkloric Orchestra. This will mark a milestone in the history of the cueca, as it allowed for a more profound interest of the music industry in cueca as a versatile genre that was becoming increasingly apt for various distribution mechanisms as well as broad and diverse audiences (Solis Poblete n.d.).[118] **Versions 2** and **3** feature a more conventional folk ensemble instrumentation with the latter however a closer reference to a peasant imaginary, with the guitar rather than the piano, the adding of the *tormento*[119] and diverse *tamboreos*[120] in the percussive section, and a more acoustic sound overall.

All the three versions remain within the framework of a 6/8+3/4 metre throughout the whole song. The presence of the orchestra in **version 1,** however, favours a steady rhythm with a regular tempo, while the other two versions appear to present a freer rhythmic accompaniment.

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[117] Emphasis is mine. Cantores in the urban-popular cueca tradition refer to their own voices as whistles to point out the high-pitched, high volume, sharp sound they have to achieve when singing. Singing in this cueca style is the most important feature, where cantores compete, among other things, on who possesses the best 'whistle.'

[118] http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/96

[119] A *tormento* is a wooden rectangular idiophone which can be placed on the musician's lap, or it can have its own base, allowing it to be percussed horizontally. According to Isabel (Chabelita) Fuentes, the founder of Las Morenitas, the tormento appeared in the cueca alongside the pandero around 1940 (personal communication 16 March 2018).

[120] *Tamboreo* or *tañido* is a rhythmic thump on the guitar or the harp that is traditionally taken as part of the folkloric rhythmic section.

*Figure 4.15*

## La rosa perdida (1954)

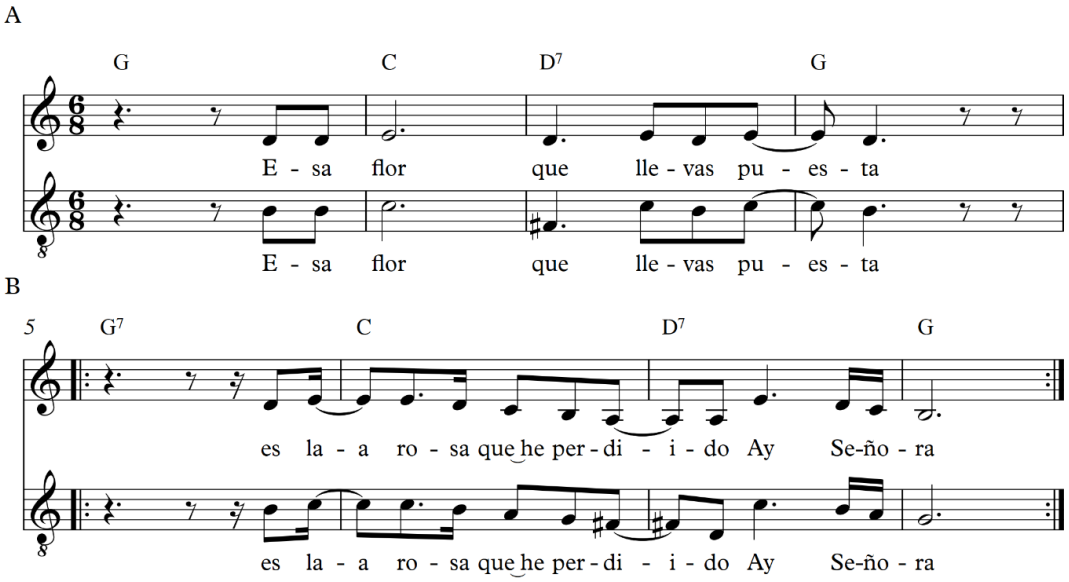



*Figure 4.16*

## La rosa perdida (1964)

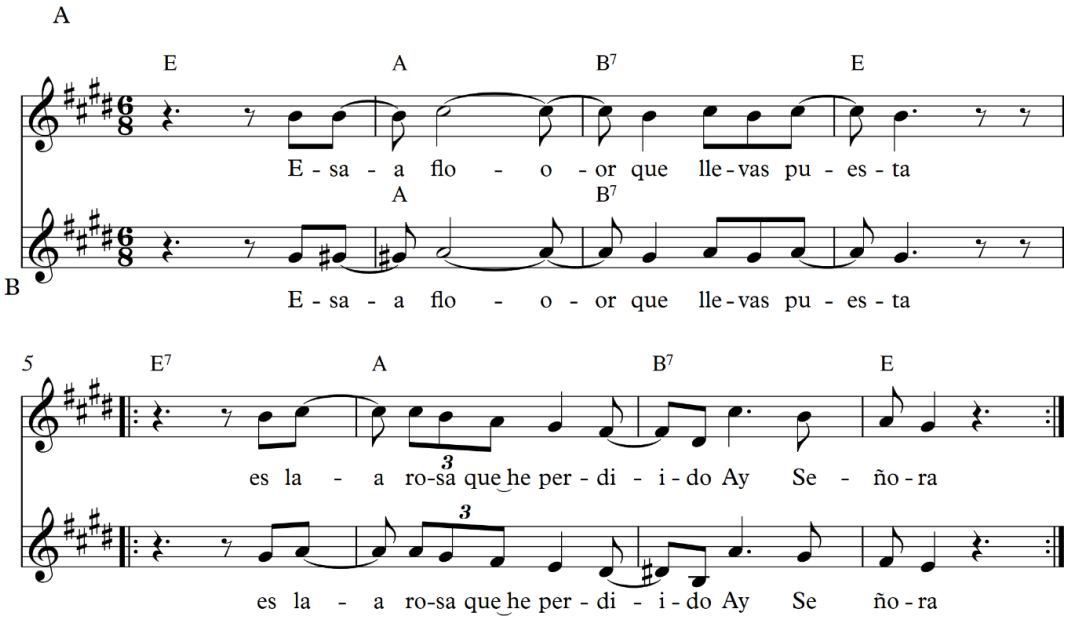
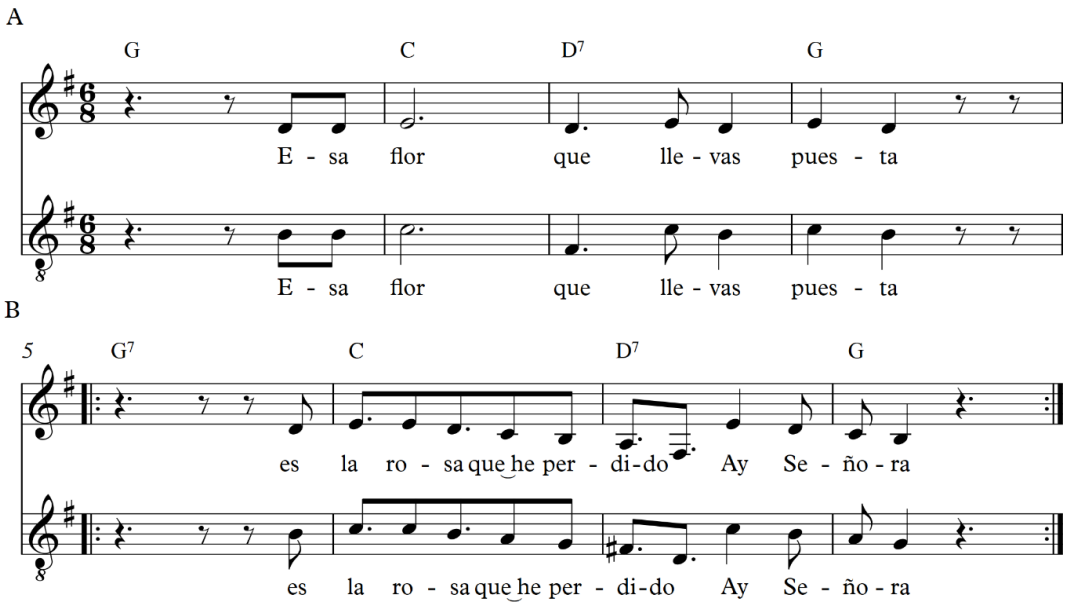


*Figure 4.17*

# La rosa perdida (1968)



## Example N° 5: La Consentida

*Background*

'La Consentida' (the Capricious Woman) is a cueca composed by Jaime Atria (1919-1984), a Chilean musician and composer, and this cueca won him the folkloric competition of the *Festival Internacional de la Canción de Viña del Mar*'s second version in 1961—which still today constitutes a high-profile international music festival that takes place in Chile. I would affirm without hesitation that, for better or worse, this is the most widely known cueca in Chile today, shortly followed by 'El Guatón Loyola.' People in Chile who know very little about cueca will surely have a reference of these two cuecas at least by name. However, in the world of the cueca today, especially in the urban cueca scene, this cueca appears to be controversial for a number of reasons. In the first place, written in 1961, when, as we have seen, the poetic structure of the cueca had been established in the city in the form copla-seguidilla-remate, this cueca is written using only seguidillas, without the copla, which is for many an essential constitutive part of the cueca without which it loses its identity.[121] Secondly, and as we will see below, the music structure does not precisely match the custom of the time, which makes many traditionalists today to affirm that this is actually not a cueca. However, the analysis I have been carrying out so far allows me to conclude that the cueca, in fact, is a versatile genre which has taken different poetic and musical forms historically, and that change is actually one of the factors of its relentless persistence through centuries, a process that continues at a rapid pace in the present. Thirdly, this cueca has been most commonly associated with the huaso tradition which, throughout Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990), was the only permitted stream of cueca. Particularly after the 1990s, this association raises high rejection from younger generations who grew up under the dictatorship. With all that said, this example constitutes an interesting illustration of the shifting spirit of the time when it was engendered. Also, the five chosen versions to be presented below will show part of the prolificacy of the 1960s decade in terms of bursting creativity and stylistic diversification in the urban cueca scene.

The first recorded version of this song (**version 1**) is interpreted by *Los Hermanos Sauvalle*, formed by brothers Alfredo and Sergio, who are best known for their participation in the legendary folk group *Los (Huasos) Quincheros* (1937-). **Version 2** is

[121] That said, we have seen through this analysis how the current poetic form of the cueca was not properly established until at least 1946, and gradually sustained until its consecration in the 1960s.

interpreted by *Los Hanga Roa*, a trio who recorded several tracks that were placed in a couple of records in 1962. There is not much information about them other than this, and that Mery Hernández was their (probable) leading voice (Cancionero de Cuecas n.d.). Hanga Roa is the capital of Easter Island, and it also gives the name to a famous *boîte*[122] located in the second floor of Hotel Carrera in Santiago, which during the 1950s was one of the emblematic venues to host the festive encounter around the cueca and other regional musics. **Version 3** appears in a record featuring Los Hermanos Lagos and Las Consentidas which was made in 1966, as part of the tradition mentioned above of collaboration between male and female groups of the folk scene. The version by *Silvia infantas y Los Cóndores* (**version 4**) is the one by which this song is most widely known. Silvia Infantas started her artistic career in the 1940s both as an actress and through singing in the radio, at times of the emerging of a tradition that would crown the presence of female singers within huaso duos or trios in the 1950s. This tradition allowed for greater complexity of vocal harmony, as the leading female pitch presented wider distance from male vocal lines adding new combination possibilities (González and Rolle 2005, 384). With Silvia Infantas one can see the thorough exploitation of this resource with great success, until the 1970s where creole music would have definitely become of lower public interest in favour of music with social content, such as the Nueva Canción. Thus, between 1954 and 1960 Infantas performed together with *Los Baqueanos*, to later start a new project with *Los Cóndores* in 1960, which lasted until 1969, always favouring a creole repertoire with remarkable success, as her versions of numerous traditional cuecas—'Chicha de Curacaví,' 'La Consentida,' 'Los Lagos de Chile,' among others—still resonate today in many young contemporary ears.

If Silvia Infantas represents the archetype of the refined cantora, now the artistic singer, Ester Soré (1915-1996) would take it one step further. A cinematographic success since the late 1930s, she combined the scenes of music and film, becoming one of the first national 'pop stars,' whose influence on style and fashion as well as on music and singing would be undeniable by the end of the 1960s. Those were the years when she recorded the famous LP *Somos de Calle Larga* (1969), which features the current version (**version 5**), with *Los Baqueanos*, who as we have seen had formerly worked with Silvia Infantas. According to González, Óhlsen and Rolle (2009), her 'use of a medium pitch,

[122] Borrowed from the French language, the word *boîte* refers to sorts of modern ballrooms that operated in urban locations in Chile (and Iberian-American cities) between the 1940s and 1960s. It would be an ancestor to today's *boliches* or dance clubs.

warmer and more eloquent, as well as gentler and closer to speech' (325) contrasted the demanding high-pitched vocal placement proper to the typical folk singers of those times. Soré's style can be also noticed in the Hanga Roa's version (**version 2**) which was referred to as a style that reflected an active involvement with the urban bohemian night in Santiago.[123]

[123] A more detailed history of the cantora in Chile can be found in chapter 6.

*Table 4.5*

| LA CONSENTIDA | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Version** | **Version 1** | **Version 2** | **Version 3** | **Version 4** | **Version 5** |
| **Year** | 1961 | 1962 | 1966 | 1968 | 1969 |
| **Author** | Jaime Atria | Jaime Atria | Jaime Atria | Jaime Atria | Jaime Atria |
| **Interpreters** | Hermanos Sauvalle | Hanga Roa | Hermanos Lagos | Silvia Infantas y Los Cóndores | Ester Soré y Los Baqueanos |
| **Album** | *Toi güeno pal mundial* | *Aro y Aro* | *Santiago de fiesta* | *Con permiso soy la cueca* | *Somos de Calle Larga* |
| **Year** | 1961 | 1962 | 1966 | 1968 | 1969 |
| **Instrumentation** | Harp, guitar, pandero, second guitar, huaso duet | Pandero, *cacharaina*,[124] accordion, guitar, double-bass, piano, female duet | Accordion, guitar, drums, pandero, piano, claps, soloist male singer, female duet | Piano, accordion, guitar, pandero, other percussions, female soloist, male backing vocals | Piano, pandero, platos, guitar, accordion |
| **Musical form** | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A |
| **Poetic form** | Seguidilla - seguidilla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate | Seguidilla - seguidilla - seguidilla - seguidilla — remate | Seguidilla - seguidilla - seguidilla - seguidilla — remate | Seguidilla - seguidilla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate | Seguidilla - seguidilla - seguidilla - seguidilla — remate |
| **Key signature** | D minor | A minor | D minor | A minor | A minor |
| **Harmony** | | Minor key; modulation to relative major (F major); use of innovative tonal functions such as ii-V-I | | As this is a recent authored song (by Jaime Atria, 1961), with a specific and innovative musical proposal, all following versions will maintain the same harmonic arrangement. | |
| **Melodic range** | 10th | $10^{th}$ | $10^{th}$ | $10^{th}$ | $10^{th}$ |
| **Vocal Harmony** | Parallel thirds | Parallel thirds | Soloist male alternates with female duet singing in parallel thirds | Three vocal lines in parallel thirds, with female singer being the leading voice | Three vocal lines in parallel thirds, with female singer being the leading voice |
| **Singing style** | Melody constantly on the beat. Singing style relates to the contained, sophisticated vocal placement proper of the musical industry of the time | Melodic rhythm mostly on the beat, refined vocal placement proper of radial-industrial folk singers | Considerable melodic syncopations exhibit several off-beat emphases as well as irregular subdivisions such as the use of semiquavers and triplets | Introduction of new dynamisms such as the introduction of clearly intended staccatos and certain intensity variations | Lead singer has a darker vocal colour, a loosened, almost conversational, vocal style; less careful vocal harmonisations, marking a more proximate, communicative approach to folk singing |
| **Metre** | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) |
| **Rhythm** | Regular tempo, accented downbeat. Double-bass marks quavers 2-3 and 5-6 | Instrumental syncopation, double-bass stressing quavers 2, 3 and 5. | Playful melodic rhythm represents the mediatised urban folk style that was in trend during the | Regular tempo | Regular tempo |

[124] *Cacharaina* is a cow or donkey mandible commonly used as a percussion instrument.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 1950s and 1960s. | | |
| **Available from** | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/1 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/3 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/12 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/27 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/36 |

As this is a relatively recent, authored song (by Jaime Atria, 1961), with a specific and innovative musical proposal, all five versions will maintain the same harmonic arrangement. The song is in minor key, which is not something strikingly new in urban cueca. Nevertheless, this song incorporates a slightly different tonal cadence than the typical I-V-V-I—which, as seen in previous examples sometimes includes the dominant or secondary dominant. In this case, it develops further tonal functions to achieve a brief modulation to the relative major key, which constitutes an innovation for the time. This is quite interesting as the modulation can be interpreted as a ii-V-I progression, which might illustrate the growing influence of Anglophone music in Chile in those years. According to González, Óhlsen and Rolle (2009), 'the 1960s started in Chile with an uncontainable invasion of North American discographic successes, causing US youth music to become virtually a monopoly in 1960 and 1961' (501).

In all five cases the musical form remains the typical ABBABB ABB AB A; however, in the poetic structure this time the copla is replaced by two seguidillas. This has been done before, as we can see in examples 'La Japonesa' and 'Corazones Partidos' above. The vocal melody develops in a range of an octave and a 3$^{rd}$ (i.e. a 10$^{th}$) in all versions as well.

Regarding singing styles, **Version 1** features a male duet singing in parallel thirds, constantly on the beat (Fig. 4.18), exhibiting the contained, sophisticated vocal placement proper of the music industry of the time. Conversely, while in **version 2** melodic rhythm remains mostly on the beat (Fig. 4.19), a syncopated feel is brought about by the double bass stress on beats 2, 3 and 5, making the singing style of the female duet more close to a bohemian urban tradition that was related to Tango and other related genres. This marks a distance from the countryside, setting a more urban style that refers to other types of musics that were currently performed in Santiago's night scene. In **version 3,** the vocal interpretation develops considerable syncopations, exhibiting several off-beat emphases as well as irregular subdivisions such as the use of semiquavers and triplets (Fig. 4.20), in what feels like a playful melodic rhythm, as has proved to be quite typical of the Hermanos Lagos's style as well as that of Las Consentidas—with Inés Sotelo being a

former member of Dúo María-Inés. This has been described in many cuecas before, representing the mediatised urban folk style that was in trend during the 1950s and 1960s. In **version 4** a female singer (Silvia Infantas) sings the first melodic line, with two vocal lines below, singing in this way during the whole song. The singing style is again a refinement of the peasant referent, in this case quite modernised, taking the new harmonic possibilities that this song offers to a high level while introducing new dynamisms such as the introduction of clearly intended staccatos and intensity variations (Fig. 4.21). In this way, Silvia Infantas faithfully reflects the paradigmatic change from the cantora archetype to that of the artistic singer. In **version 5** singing style defers notably from that of Silvia Infanta's (**version 4**), with Soré's darker vocal colour, and a loosened, almost conversational vocal style, along with less careful vocal harmonisations, marking a more proximate, communicative approach to folk singing, to which the actress's performative skills contributed to a great extent.

In terms of instrumentation, the use of more elaborate guitar embellishments throughout the song in **version 1** appears as a source of refinement of the rural model but retaining the acoustic sound of harp and guitar that always refers back to the original peasant referent. **Versions 2, 3, 4** and **5** present roughly the same instrumentation, reflective of the urban folk scene—piano, accordion, guitar, pandero and other percussions—though there are a couple of distinctions: **version 2** features the double-bass with a prominent rhythmic role, and **version 3** presents the drum kit, which I believe to be a mark of the group Las Consentidas in those years.

In all versions, we find the Hemiola pattern (6/8+3/4). In **version 1** the pandero functions as a constant rhythm marker, while the double bass emphasises quavers 2-3 and 5-6, which is the most common pattern in cueca. **Versions 2** and **3** feature a syncopated feel with a considerably irregular tempo, while in **versions 1**, **4** and **5** the tempo is more regular, as featured in the reinvented huaso tradition. This reflects a significant distinction within the discographic urban folk sound, where some interpreters approach a renovated creole imaginary based on the huaso style while others opt for a freer, more contemporary urban bohemian style.

*Figure 4.18*

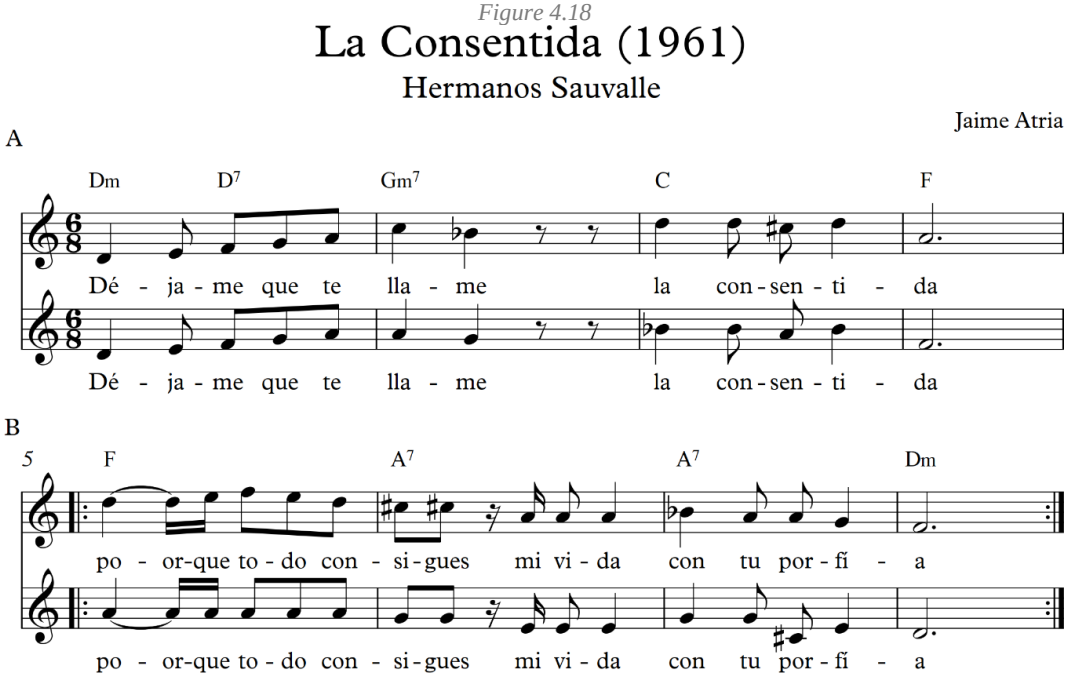



*Figure 4.19*

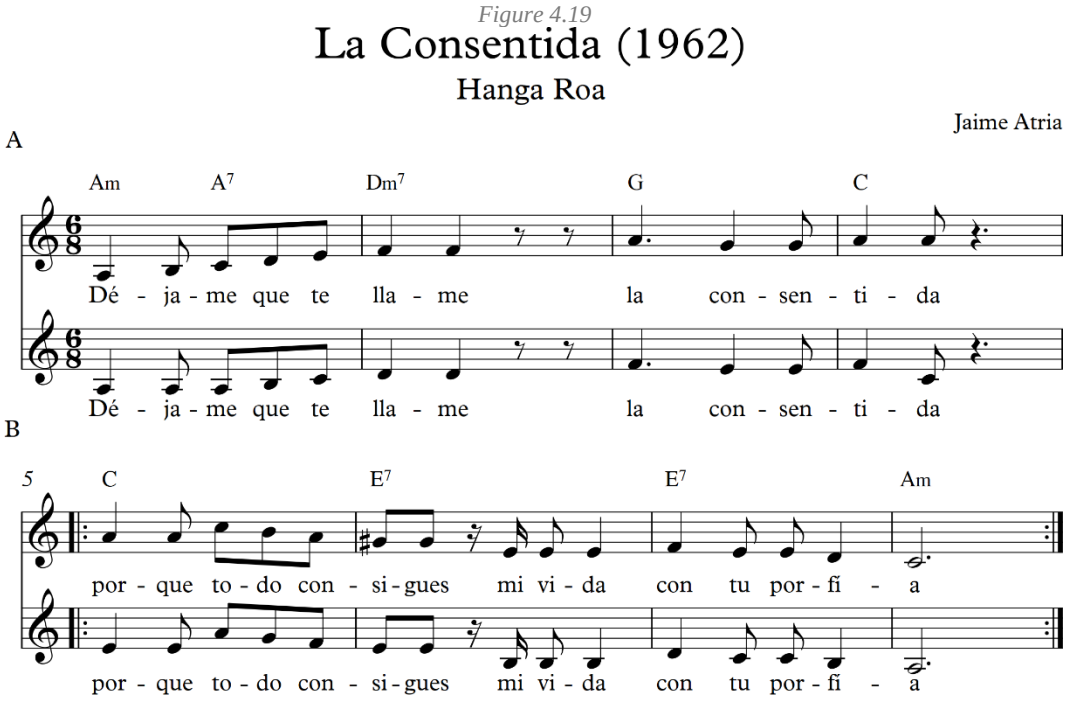


*Figure 4.20*

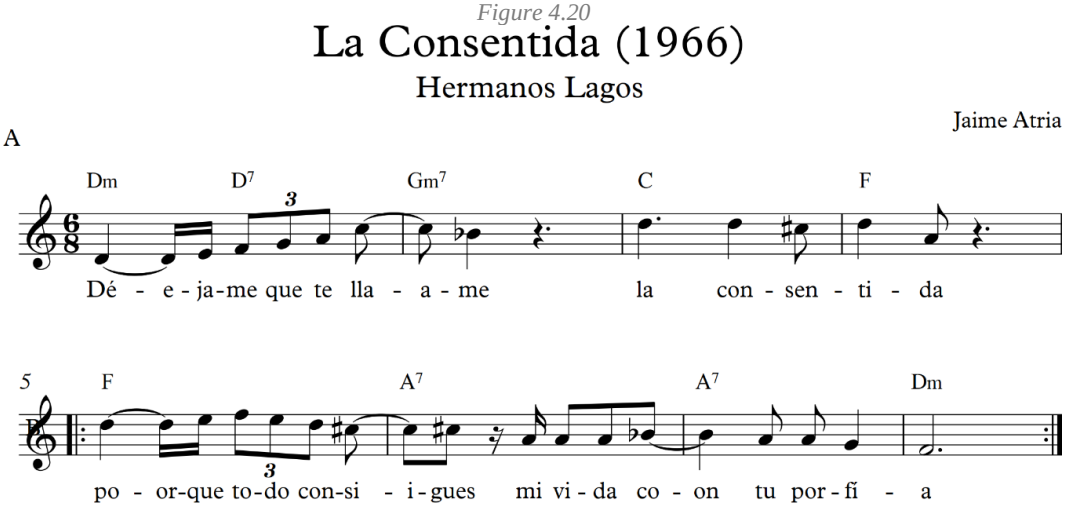



*Figure 4.21*

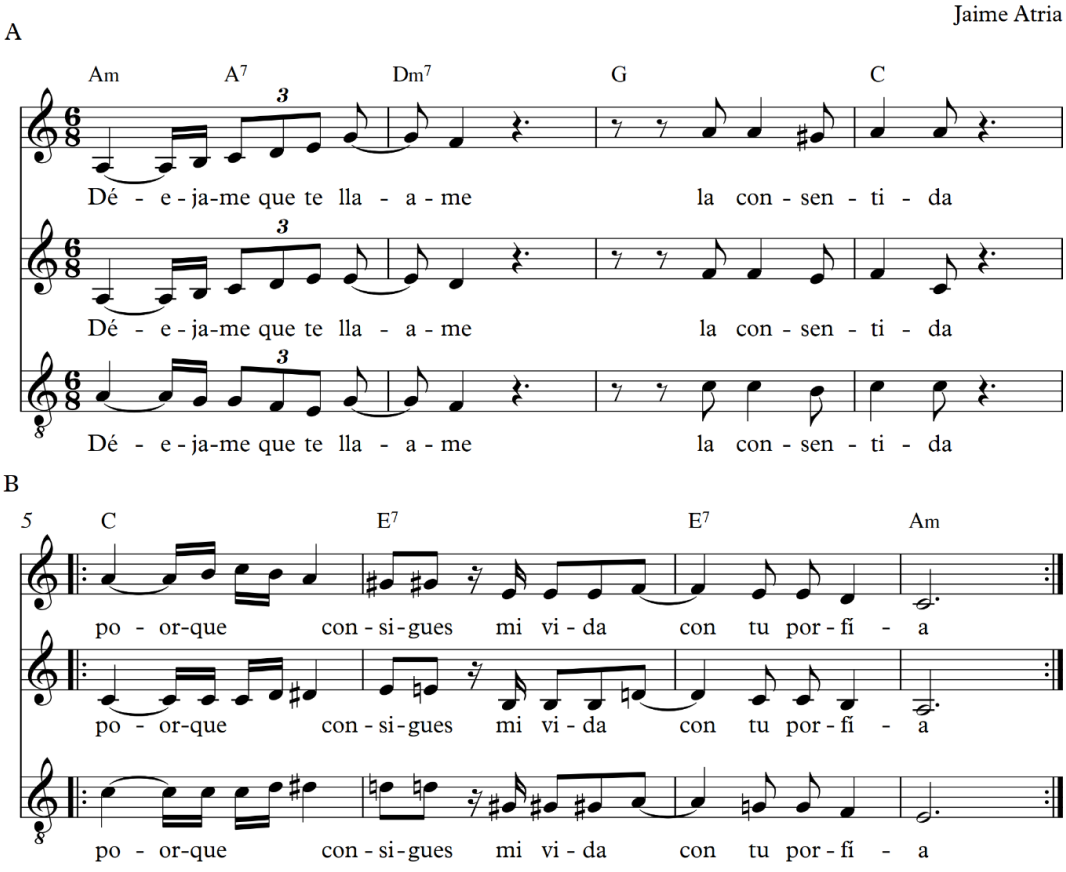
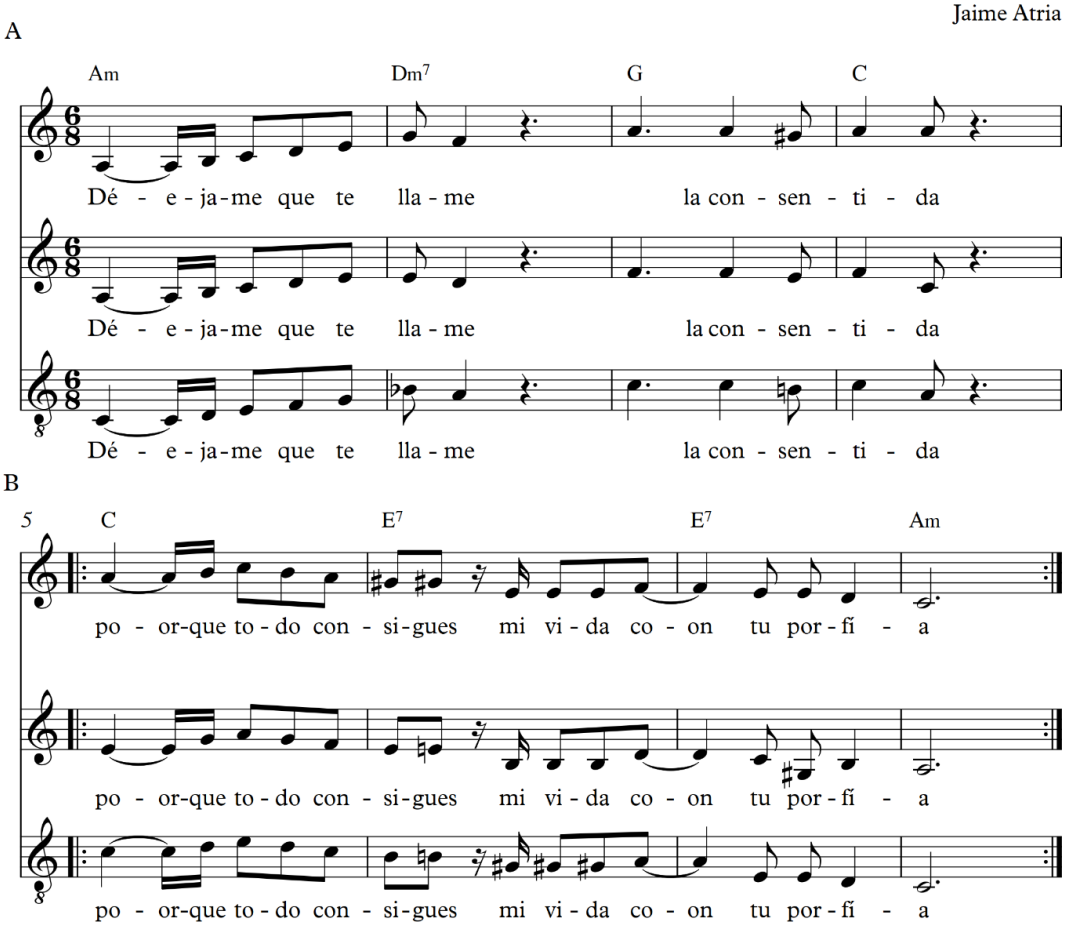


*Figure 4.22*

# La Consentida (1969)

## Ester Soré y Los Baqueanos

Jaime Atria



## Example N° 6: El Chute Alberto

*Background*

Roberto Parra (1925-1995), Violeta Parra's younger brother, constitutes a tremendous contribution to the Chilean musical culture. Having lived quite a modest childhood, he worked in anything life would offer from a very early age. Already in the 1930s Parra was working as a musician along some of his siblings (Violeta, Lalo and Óscar) in local circuses where they would play jazz, foxtrot, cuecas and other dance genres of the time. Always at the margins of society, he managed to produce a vast amount of original poetry and music, which narrated the hidden realities of the urban outskirts he had gotten to know so well. One of such narrations is the cueca 'El Chute Alberto,' which tells the story of how a stylish, wealthy young man, Alberto, was killed near a brothel, for being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Roberto Parra's cuecas are now so famous that they received a whole style label: the *cueca chora*, which refers to the urban-popular cueca of the area of Valparaíso.[125]

**Version 1** is interpreted by Los Perlas in 1966, even before Roberto Parra had the chance to record his own cuecas on LP, in 1967. As described earlier, Los Perlas represented a *popular* sector in Chilean society, and Parra's creations proved to be quite a match for their humorous style.

The compilation *Las cuecas del Tío Roberto* was recorded in two volumes, the first one in 1967, where Roberto would have recorded 18 of his cuecas choras, which would account for the vicissitudes of life in the margins of society, representing people who according to him, did not have their folklore. He recorded this first album with his sister Violeta, his brothers Lalo and Lautaro, and some other great musicians of the scene such as the pianist Rafael Traslaviña. The second one was recorded with his nephew, Ángel Parra in 1972, where his wife Catalina Rojas would have also participated gathering some of the same musicians they had in the first production. Here they recorded eight more cuecas of his authorship, among which we find **version 2**.

Now **version 3** is interpreted by *Los Tres*, which is a Chilean rock band formed in 1987 by Álvaro Henríquez, Roberto Lindl, Francisco Molina, and with the later incorporation of the talented guitar of Ángel Parra—son of Ángel Parra, grandson of

[125] See glossary for definition of terms *choro* and *cueca chora*. More details on Roberto Parra's life and music can be found in Parra Sandoval (1989) and Parra Sandoval (2012).

Violeta Parra—in 1990. Their repertoire has covered a large variety of Chilean styles, from rock to cueca, and having had a solid, long-standing musical trajectory, they have been a crucial figure for the revival of the cueca in Chile. Álvaro Henríquez got to know the cueca through Roberto Parra, when he worked as a musician for the production of 'La Negra Ester' (1988), a sort of music-theatre production of the artwork of the same name that was written in *décimas*[126] by Roberto Parra. The play was produced by a theatre company called *Gran Circo Teatro*, where Álvaro Henríquez formed part of the cast of musicians—The *Regia Orquesta* band—that would accompany the plot with their music, which comprised cueca, mambo, tango, polka, and '*guachaca*[127] jazz,' among other rhythms. This experience sealed the inspirational relationship Henríquez would hold with Roberto Parra, and consequently with the cueca chora. This relationship materialised in the collaborative recording of several cuecas, among which is this version—recorded in 1994 and released by Sony music in 1998. The organisation of the annual independence-day celebration *La Yein Fonda* since 1996 is also owed to this relationship, where they gathered renowned musicians of the historical cueca scene—such as María Ester Zamora, Pepe Fuentes, Rafael Traslaviña, among others—generating a highly relevant platform for the by then emerging process of revival of the cueca.

[126] See glossary.

[127] *Guachaca* is a Chilean popular idiom that would relate to the world of the *roto*, meaning something in-between that which is unrefined, cheesy, poor, and with a touch of humour at the same time. It is not a derogatory term, but rather used with pride by a popular sector of Chilean society to identify themselves and their customs. The style of jazz played by Roberto Parra was labelled with this word by his brother Nicanor, and later popularised as a genuine Chilean jazz-style.

*Comparative analysis*

*Table 4.6*

| EL CHUTE ALBERTO | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Version** | **Version 1** | **Version 2** | **Version 3** |
| **Author** | Roberto Parra | Roberto Parra | Roberto Parra |
| **Interpreters** | Los Perlas | Roberto y Ángel Parra | Los Tres y Roberto Parra |
| **Album** | *Las mejores cuecas del mundo* | *Las Cuecas Del Tío Roberto* | *Peineta. Los Tres Presentando a Roberto & Lalo Parra* |
| **Year** | 1966 | 1972 | 1998 |
| **Instrumentation** | Percussions (banging a table, platos, pandero, accordion, guitar, piano, male duet | Guitar, piano, pandero, male duet | 2 electric guitars, drums, electric bass, male duet |
| **Musical form** | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A |
| **Poetic form** | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate |
| **Key signature** | G major | E major | D major |
| **Harmony** | IV-V-I-I | IV-V-I-I | IV-V-I-I |
| **Melodic range** | 4th | 7th | 7th |
| **Vocal Harmony** | Unison | Parallel thirds | Soloist singer and then male duet in parallel thirds |
| **Singing style** | Theatrical, conversational style. Slight melodic syncopations. | Canto a la rueda. Unique singing style: versatile singers that have been at the core of a diverse and dynamic popular music scene. | Singing style follows Roberto Parra's guachaca-jazz singing style |
| **Metre** | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) |
| **Rhythm** | Regular tempo | Regular tempo | Regular tempo |
| **Available from** | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/17 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/49 | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OxEu7l-QDYM |

In all three versions, the form is the typical ABBABB ABB AB A, while poetic structure comprises one copla, two seguidillas and one remate, as usual. The harmonic accompaniment of this example differs a bit from the typical I-V pattern, because, in this case, the subdominant function is an important structural element, resulting in a IV-V-I sequence. The metre is also the same in all three versions: 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola). This melody will be heard in many *cuecas porteñas* (from Valparaíso), and more so in cuecas of Roberto Parra's authorship.

Regarding the singing styles, in **version 1** they sing most of the song together in unison, in the theatrical conversational style that constitutes the signature of Los Perlas. In **version 2**, Roberto and his nephew Ángel sing in parallel thirds and they intercalate the leading voice, much in the same way they would do it in the tradition of canto a la rueda, the singing tradition that took place in industrial neighbourhoods in both Santiago and Valparaíso, as there was an active commercial dependence between both cities —the

capital and the port).[128] The melody is slightly modified (Fig. 4.24) and most of the cuecas written by Roberto Parra use other this or the previous variant of this melody. Vocal interpretation of this pair is unique, evidencing versatile singers that have been at the core of a diverse and dynamic *popular* music scene; notably, they exhibit a break in the voice that one can relate to the singing tradition of the peasant cantoras of Roberto Parra's natal area in the south of Chile.

In terms of instrumentation, while **versions 1** and **2** maintain a fairly traditional urban folk timbre, **version 2** already stands out with the unmistakeable plucking style of the 'guachaca-jazz-man' Roberto Parra, a style that will be further explored in **version 3** through a rock-band formation where two electric guitars pluck a cueca-style major key cadence, the high-hat emulates the pandero, and the rhythmic presence of the electric bass elegantly reinterpret and re-contextualise it in the Chilean rock scene of the 1990s.

[128] Moreover, one can observe that many of the songs (both melodies and lyrics) that constitute the traditional repertoire of canto a la rueda sung in Santiago were actually collected in Valparaíso.

*Figure 4.23*

## El chute Alberto (1966)

Roberto Parra

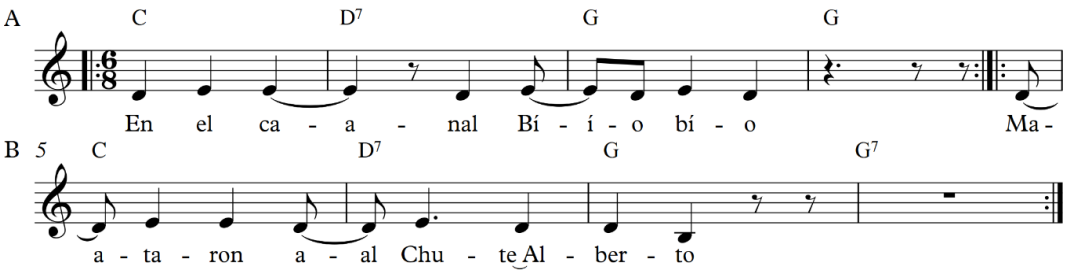



*Figure 4.24*

## El chute Alberto (1972)

Roberto Parra

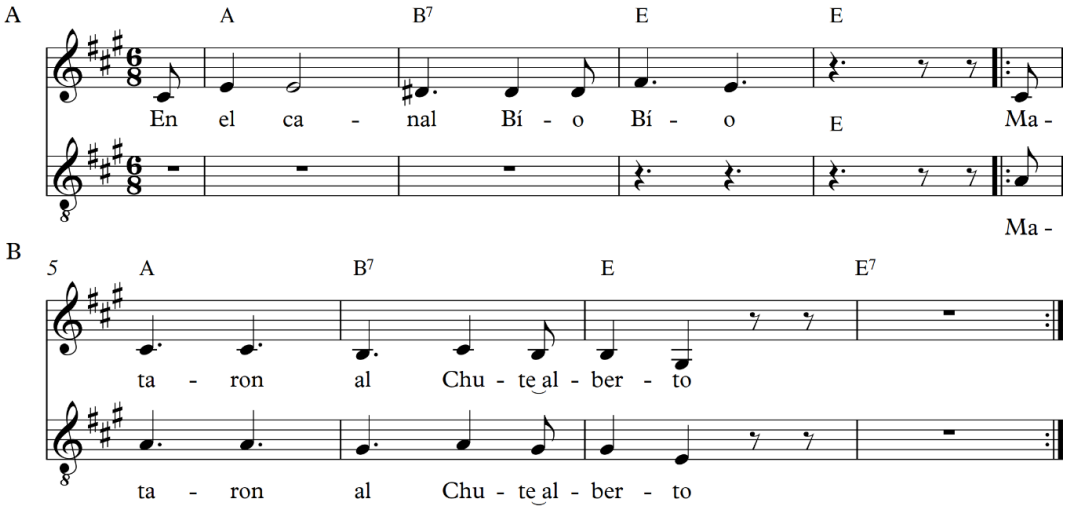
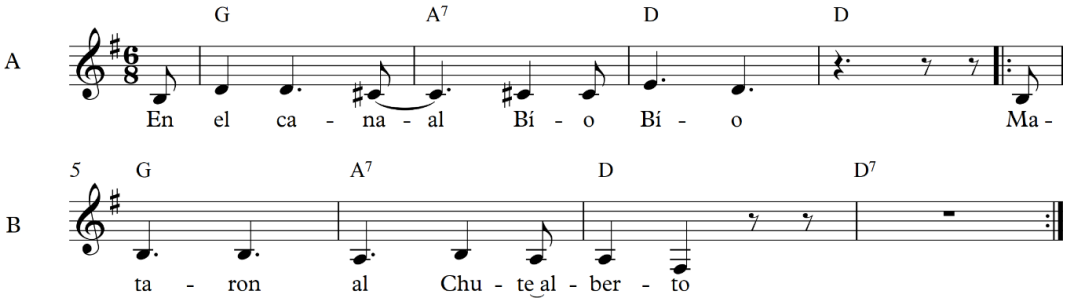



*Figure 4.25*

## El chute Alberto (1998)

Roberto Parra



## Example N° 7: La Mariposa

*Background*

Violeta Parra was a Chilean singer, researcher and composer who dedicated her life to collecting and reinterpreting traditional music and poetry from rural areas of Chile's central zone. She was born in San Carlos, a rural town of central Chile, and thus she was already part of the heritage she was safeguarding. Shortly after moving to the capital at a very young age, Violeta started performing in the urban folk scene with her sister Hilda, successfully opening a space for themselves in the 1940s discographic industry. In 1953 her trajectory took a turn when she decided, as advised by her older brother Nicanor, to go back to the countryside to 'unearth' her roots, which would be her major source of inspiration until the day of her death. It was during this very process when she recorded a compilation called *La Cueca presentada por Violeta Parra* ('The cueca presented by Violeta Parra'), published in 1959 as part of a series of LP productions undertaken by EMI Odeon, called *El Folklore de Chile*, which combined 24 cuecas collected by Violeta between 1957 and 1958. One of these cuecas is 'La Mariposa' (**version 1**). A significant number of Violeta Parra's informants were cantoras from the area near Concepción, where Violeta was staying while she conducted this phase of her research. These cantoras had a particular singing style, which is described in the LP booklet as characterised by 'a high-pitched, nasal voice; [with] some, however, [exhibiting a] guttural voice. They all sing dragging the voice from note to note, "glissando"-ing the intervals. They also use the falsetto, to which they arrive breaking the voice in quite a curious and delightful manner' (Soublette, 1959).[129] **Version 1** thus faithfully represents the peasant cantora style. With only her own guitar accompaniment and her unique voice, which she uses much in the same way it was described above, Violeta is capable of confusing the downbeat, with her syncopated, 'dragged'—some would even call it 'drunk'—guitar strumming, typical of rural areas in Chile.[130]

Just like the nueva canción, which developed in Chile roughly between 1960 and 1973—after which most of its exponents where either exiled or killed—canto nuevo, a younger generation's movement that remained in Chile during the dictatorship, appeared to find in Violeta Parra an important referent to continue developing a social discourse

[129] These quotes from Luis Gastón Soublette were taken from the booklet of the LP El Folklore de Chile Vol. III. 'La Cueca Presentada por Violeta Parra' (1959).

[130] Violeta Parra constitutes a notable example of the sometimes underestimated significance that women have held in the history of Chilean *música popular*. More details of her biography and relevance as a model of female musicianship in the scene can be found in chapter 6.

that had been mostly forbidden and repressed. During the first years of dictatorship, everything that was related to the nueva canción—even instruments like the *charango*—where banned as they were associated with a subversive political position. However, 'That prohibition was eventually circumvented by conservatory musicians who formed an "Andean baroque" group, which began to play in universities and churches' (Morris 1986, 123), leading to a progressive acceptance of re-contextualised Andean music, and gradually re-opening a space for a disguised engaged song which materialised in canto nuevo. Isabel Aldunate was part of this movement, becoming active in this incipient music scene in the late 1970s and recording her version of 'La Mariposa' (**version 2**) as part of the second volume of the series *El Canto Nuevo*, published by Alerce in 1980.

*Inti Illimani* ('Condors of the Sun' in *Aymara*, a northern-Chile native language) was formed in 1967 by students of Universidad Técnica de Chile who were inspired by the social reforms that took place during those years and until the military coup in 1973. A politically engaged music group, they sought to distance themselves as much as possible from the more commercial variants of folk music, opting for an indigenous referent instead, which was related to the northern zone in Chile: the Andes. And as Andean music respects no national frontiers, soon the group was exploring other Latin American musics, embarking on a journey that would allow them to display musics of different latitudes throughout their over 50 years of trajectory. The military coup in 1973 occurred while they were on tour in Europe, having to remain in Italy for 15 years of exile, where their prolific musical career endured with great success. Back in Chile in 1988, the group went through several internal crises that caused its founding musicians to leave one by one, until in 2004 members who had left got together to form *Inti Illimani Histórico*, while the remaining faction—with the Coulón brothers as the only historical members—kept the name *Inti Illimani*® in an effort to express continuity with the original project. Both factions have been able to keep developing, through separated streams, substantial musical work that faithfully honours their vast musical trajectory. The group Inti Illimani® of the Coulón brothers is the one we are citing here, with their version of 'La Mariposa.' This cueca is part of the album *El Canto de Todos* ('The song of us all') that commemorated the centenary of Violeta Parra (1917-2017), where the group convoked several international artists to join this celebratory project, gathering the voices of Silvio Rodríguez, Pablo Milanés, Joan Manuel Serrat, Isabel Parra and Tita Parra, among others. This version of La Mariposa (**version 3**) is sung by the Colombian singer Marta Gómez.

*Table 4.7*

| LA MARIPOSA | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Version** | **Version 1** | **Version 2** | **Version 3** |
| **Year** | 1959 | 1980 | 2017 |
| **Author** | Folklore | Folklore | Folklore |
| **Interpreters** | Violeta Parra | Isabel Aldunate | Inti Illimani® |
| **Album** | *El Folklore de Chile Vol. III. La Cueca presentada por Violeta Parra* | *El Canto Nuevo Vol. 2* | *El Canto de Todos* |
| **Year** | 1959 | 1980 | 2017 |
| **Instrumentation** | Guitar, cantora | Two guitars, cantora | Guitars, cantora |
| **Musical form** | AABBABB ABB AB A | AABBABB ABB AB A | AABBABB ABB AB A |
| **Poetic form** | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla — remate | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla — remate |
| **Key signature** | E major | F major | D major |
| **Harmony** | V-I-I-V | V-I-I-V | V-I-I-V |
| **Melodic range** | Octave | Octave | Octave |
| **Vocal Harmony** | Soloist | Soloist | Soloist |
| **Singing style** | The singing style of the peasant cantoras of the area near Concepción: high-pitched, nasal voice, use of glissandos and falsettos, 'breaking' of the voice. | Isabel Aldunate takes Violeta Parra as a referent. Recontextualisation of the peasant referent, exploiting the vocal and rhythmic possibilities offered in the original version. | Colombian singer Marta Gómez uses a contemporary folk singing style, with a neutral accent that evidences her foreignness as well as the internationalist, Latin-Americanist drive that has been permanent through the history of all Inti Illimani projects. |
| **Metre** | 6/8 | 6/8 | 6/8 |
| **Rhythm** | Highly syncopated. Difficulty in locating the downbeat due to syncopated, 'dragged' guitar strumming | There is a sort of mechanisation of both the singing and the guitar strumming, transferring them to a more regular tempo. | Diversification of rhythms through different guitar strumming patterns, in an effort of recontextualisation of the texture of the traditional cantora with her guitar. Regular tempo. |
| **Available from** | http://perrerac.org/chile/violeta-parra-la-cueca-presentada-por-violeta-parra-el-folklore-de-chile-vol-iii-1959/1878/ | http://perrerac.org/obras-colectivas/obra-colectiva-el-canto-nuevo-vol-2-1980/4415/ | http://perrerac.org/chile/inti-illimani-el-canto-de-todos-2017/11203/ |

This example is framed within a tradition that is more related to academia than to the music industry of the time, and Violeta Parra herself was under the wing of Universidad de Concepción when she conducted the fieldwork where she obtained this song. Her new-old approach to the cueca would find many followers who wanted to distinguish themselves from the creole folkloric canon of those times, among them many of the Nueva Canción movement exponents, who would see in Violeta's life and work

inspiration and a starting point to conduct their own research. It is no wonder they call Violeta Parra the mother of the nueva canción.[131]

Many of the cueca songs collected by Violeta Parra in the field have been orally passed across generations, thus constituting ancient examples that do not always comply with the conventional formal features of the 'industrial' cueca that became standardised in the 1940s. Thus, in this example all three versions—with **versions 2** and **3** being based on the 'original' by Violeta Parra (**version 1**)—present a slightly modified musical form: AABBABB ABB AB A. Nonetheless, poetic form maintains the conventional copla-seguidilla-seguidilla-remate structure. Also, all versions are in major key with harmonic accompaniment following a V-I-I-V pattern.

In terms of instrumentation, all three versions aim to represent the simple texture of the peasant cantora and her guitar, where dynamics is an indispensable tool of expression. **Version 1** features Violeta Parra and her guitar, **version 2** presents two guitars and Isabel Aldunate's voice, and **version 3** presents a more elaborate arrangement but still referring to this modest peasant imaginary. This last version begins with a guitar introduction that develops a plucked triad progression in a simple melody going back and forth until a guitar starts strumming a stable cueca rhythm with the guitar maintaining a pedal note in the bassline throughout the whole song. These sorts of triad progressions and the pedal note give the impression of the *guitarra traspuesta* (transposed guitar), a common usage in rural areas in Chile and Latin America whereby they tune the guitar differently, generally matching any given major chord, to allow the cantoras to improvise guitar arrangements more easily.[132]

The metre in the three cases is a 6/8 with no noticeable changes or hemiolas; the particularity in **version 1**, however, is the dragging of the meter with the guitar strumming, and the difficulty to locate the downbeat. **Versions 2** and **3** definitely take Violeta Parra as a referent, re-contextualising the rural imaginary and exploiting the vocal and rhythmic possibilities offered in the original version. Here one can observe a sort of 'mechanisation' of the dragged guitar rhythm.

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[131] Her cueca 'Los Pueblos Americanos,' which unfortunately is not included in this survey, is the typical cueca associated with the Nueva Canción, featuring the use of Andean instruments and harmonic innovations that would be part of the constituent elements of the sound of this movement.

[132] There are about 70 different guitar tunings found in different corners of rural Chile so far, and this tradition dates from medieval musical systems inherited from the Spaniards in early colonial periods.

The singing style in **version 1** defers notably from all of the famous singers of Violeta's contemporary urban cueca scene, featuring the glissandos, falsettos, and plain and simple vocal production mentioned above. In **version 2** vocal interpretation takes the shape of a more sophisticatedly placed voice; while singing style emulates the glissando and falsetto gestures, it obtains quite a different result exhibiting melismatic singing where one syllable would be sung in several notes (Fig. 4.27). I do not think this version intends to be a faithful representation of the peasant cantora's musicality, but rather a reinterpretation of it in the context of the now cantautora, Isabel, who had a specific social discourse which due to political constraints could not be expressed in words, but rather in the form of her musical choices: firstly, singing a cueca that did not belong to the huaso matrix—the only accepted, and fomented, cueca style in those years by the regime—but rather to the modest peasant cantora; and secondly, choosing a cueca that was collected by and associated with the figure of Violeta Parra, a woman that escaped the archetypal cantante of the 1950s and 1960s, instead being recognised as a voice for the people's social demands and critiques, which alongside her creative exploration of different streams of native and Latin American music, would later make her the mother of the nueva canción. This is very common when listening to cuecas that belong to other musical movements, distanced apart from the canonical urban-creole cueca that had succeeded for so many decades in the discographic industry. The cuecas from the nueva canción or canto nuevo, such as those of Víctor Jara, Violeta Parra, Rolando Alarcón, Patricio Manns, Héctor Pavez, Isabel and Ángel Parra, Inti Illimani, or *Quilapayún*, present a well-developed explorative freedom, with diverse innovations in harmony and instrumentation, as well as dissimilar singing styles and musical referents,[133] in my opinion, taking the cueca as a Latin American rather than Chilean musical form (see Jordán in Vila 2014 for a detailed account on the cueca within the Nueva Canción movement). In **version 3** Marta Gómez uses a beautiful, gentle, contemporary folk singing style, with a neutral accent that evidences her foreignness as well as the internationalist, Latin-Americanist drive that has been permanent through the history of all Inti Illimani projects, which makes even more sense when one considers that this is a tribute to Violeta Parra.

[133] It is important to note that cueca was not a genre of predilection for the *nueva canción* movement, which sought to develop a Panamerican sound that joined together the social struggles of people from all over the continent; and less it was after the coup, when Augusto Pinochet used the cueca as a control device, reducing all musical possibilities to the patronal huaso style.

*Figure 4.26*

## La Mariposa (1959)

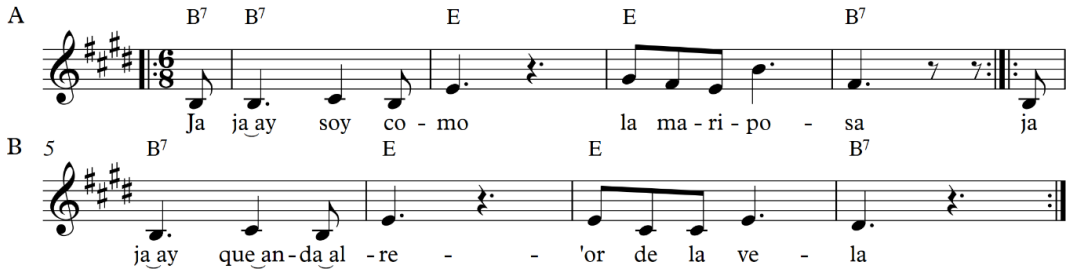



*Figure 4.27*

## La Mariposa (1980)

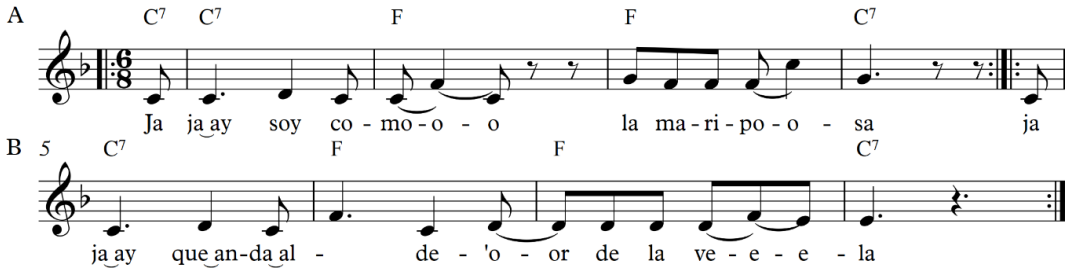
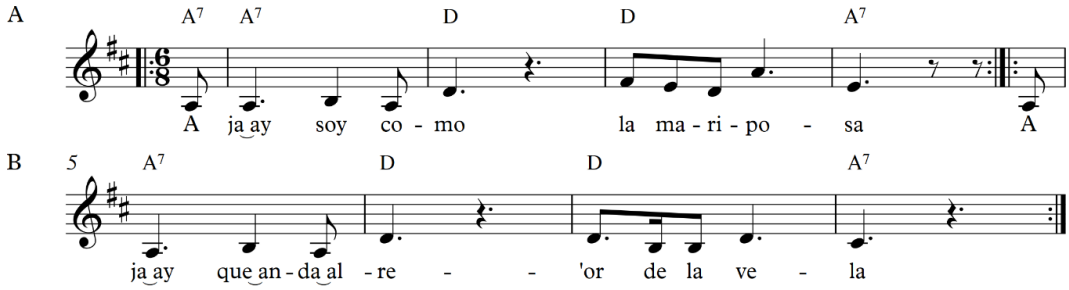



*Figure 4.28*

## La Mariposa (2017)



## Example N° 8: La Enredadera

*Background*

The cueca 'La Enredadera' was composed by the great Petronila Orellana, to whom we owe some of the most lasting and widely spread cuecas in the traditional Chilean repertoire—such as 'Chicha from Curacaví' or 'Los Lagos de Chile.' Her compositions marked a popular trend for the cueca style of at least the first half of the twentieth century.[134]

**Version 1** is interpreted by *Dúo Bascuñán-Del Campo*, one of the male duos of Chilean urban creole music that operated during the 1940s and 1950s, along with Dúo Rey-Silva, Dúo Molina-Garrido, etc. This version was later included in a 1964 cueca compilation by EMI Odeon, called *A Bailar Cueca!!*, featuring some of the cueca versions we have analysed here, such as those from Hermanas Parra or Las Dos Alicias.

**Version 2** was recorded in 1978 by Las Consentidas (Inés Sotelo and Claudia Martínez) in a record that features a persisting reference to the traditional peasant imaginary but also exhibiting some stylistic innovations of the late 1970s.

*El Parcito* was a cantora duo formed in 2009 by two women, Claudia Mena, a piano student in her late teens, and Patricia Díaz, a drama student, who became friends within the process of the cueca revival. Both of them had found the cueca through a workshop given by Luis Castro González in 2008, about canto a la rueda.[135] They got together and began singing cuecas and tonadas, first in the scene of the cueca brava, where they learned from and shared with *Los Chinganeros, La Gallera*, and individual practitioners such as Luis Castro or Dángelo Guerra. With Dángelo's guidance, they produced their first cueca album (2010), where this version (**version 3**) was recorded. Since 2011 they got to know and work with the great Margot Loyola (1918-2015), who for three or four years took them as disciples and passed on to them a large part of her knowledge and *popular* wisdom.

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[134] Together with Derlinda Araya and Esther Martínez, Petronila Orellana was one of the most notable cantoras in the 1930s and 1940s. These women helped to position the figure of the cantora within mass cultures, where, some decades later, Violeta Parra (1917-1967), Margot Loyola (1918-2015) and Gabriela Pizarro (1932-1999) would take great relevance (Gonález and Rolle 2005 372). As we can see, the history of Chilean *música folklórica* is traversed by extraordinary women who have built the historical lineage of the cantora, which is further discussed in chapter 6.

[135] He would later systematise his information and give this workshops massively throughout Chile. This is actually the workshop I had the chance to attend during my fieldwork in 2016 and 2017.

*Las Primas* is a cueca group formed in 2009 by Leslie Becerra, Cecilia Canto, Tania Gómez and Patricia Araya, all of whom had participated in previous musical projects related to the cueca since the onset of the revival process. In this new venture, they decided to go beyond cueca, exploring all genres that had to do with the tradition of the cantora, seeking to rebuild a historical Chilean female repertoire. Their main referents are on the one hand the broad archetype of the cantora, having a very close apprentice-relationship with the legendary group Las Morenitas (1954-), as well as Los Chileneros—the group behind the urban-popular style that had been for centuries absent from the main Chilean folkloric scene. Their second album *Chilenitas* (2013) is entirely dedicated to the cueca, and it is here that we found this version of 'La Enredadera' (**version 4**).

*Table 4.8*

| LA ENREDADERA | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Version** | **Version 1** | **Version 2** | **Version 3** | **Version 4** |
| **Year** | 1964 | 1978 | 2010 | 2013 |
| **Author** | Petronila Orellana | Petronila Orellana | Petronila Orellana | Petronila Orellana |
| **Interpreters** | Dúo Bascuñán-Del Campo | Las Consentidas | El Parcito | Las Primas |
| **Album** | *A bailar cueca* | *Sáquense los guantes y arriba las palmas* | *El Parcito y sus cuecas con moño* | *Chilenitas* |
| **Instrumentation** | Piano, guitar, double-bass, pandero, huaso duet, cantora duet | Piano, guitar, electric bass, pandero, drum kit, female duet | Piano, guitar, pandero, double-bass | Guitar, pandero, piano, female duet, tañador, |
| **Musical form** | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A | ABBABB ABB AB A |
| **Poetic form** | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla — remate | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla - remate | Copla - seguidilla - seguidilla — remate |
| **Key signature** | F major | E major | D major | D major |
| **Harmony** | I-V-V-I | I-V-V-I | I-V-V-I | I-V-V-I |
| **Melodic range** | Octave | Octave | Octave | Octave |
| **Vocal Harmony** | Huaso duet alternates with cantora duet, all singing in parallel thirds | Parallel thirds | Parallel thirds | Parallel thirds |
| **Singing style** | Singing style in accordance with industrial creole cueca, both cantores and cantoras sing with a technically placed voice normally in a high-pitch, with a certain level of syncopation but always in a controlled manner around an easily identifiable downbeat. | 'Refined' cantora duet (artistic singers) singing in parallel thirds, in a high pitch, syncopated phrasing style | High pitch, 'festive' singing, related to an old urban-popular cueca tradition, previous to its industrialisation through the radio and recording industry. They sing 'a la rueda.' Melodic tempo is regular and mostly on the beat. | They sing 'a la rueda,' slightly syncopated melody |
| **Metre** | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) | 6/8+3/4 (Hemiola) |
| **Rhythm** | Regular tempo | Regular tempo, prominent rhythmic section with electric bass stressing the meter changes (Hemiola) | Instrumental syncopation | Instrumental syncopation |
| **Available from** | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/9 | http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/67 | Attached mp3 | Attached mp3 |

The form in all four versions of this example is the typical ABBABB ABB AB A, while poetic structure is constituted by copla, two seguidillas and remate. The harmonic arrangement goes back to the standard I-V-V-I structure of traditional cuecas.

Instrumentation is also similar in all four cases, featuring piano, guitar, double-bass and percussions. **Version 2**, however, exhibits a prominent electric bass and several percussive instruments such as the drum kit, giving the rhythmic section a central place—

as has been seen in previous versions by Las Consentidas. In **versions 3** and ,**4** the instrumentation also assumes an essential rhythmic role, displaying a playful development of the 6/8 metre and its interchange with 3/4, and stressing the 2, 3 and 5, 6 quavers that gives it the swung feel that much characterised urban-popular cueca, the primary revival referent.

Singing style represents in **version 1** the convention of the music industry of those times, where both cantores and cantoras would sing in parallel thirds with a technically placed voice typically in a high-pitch, and a certain level of syncopation but always in a controlled manner around an easily identifiable downbeat (Fig. 4.29). In **version 2** we can observe how the female duet (Las Consentidas) display a syncopated phrasing style (Fig. 4.30), anticipating or dragging the downbeat by a quaver or so, singing in parallel thirds with the paradigmatic high-pitched voice of the *cantante escénica*, whose performing platform had been reduced by those years (1978).[136] In **version 3**, the female duet (El Parcito) also sings in parallel thirds, though intercalating the leading voice in each section of the song—in the canto a la rueda style. Without much formal change, the song however takes a completely different feel than previous versions, exhibiting a more natural and festive attitude towards the practice of the cueca, proper to an interpretation that is no longer industrially sketched for an audience, but rather practised in a more intimate environment—a space to absorb a legendary tradition that the singers were just beginning to learn, displaying their first sonic results.[137] In **version 4,** a female duet sings the whole cueca in parallel thirds. Once again, they rotate both vocal lines between the three female singers of the group, in the traditional canto a la rueda style, which can also be identified in their phrasing (Fig. 4.32). The peasant cantora referent is present in this version, with solid and beautifully simple high-pitched voices that are very close to the naturalness of the 'pre-industrial' cantora that had not yet gone through the record companies of the 1950s.

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[136] After their great success of the 1960s they were replaced by socially engaged song in the 1960s and 1970s until the dictatorship generated the 'cultural blackout' that suppressed pretty much all the Chilean urban-popular and folk music, with cueca being relegated to clandestineness, with the *tonada* taking its place in the voices of *Los Huasos Quincheros*, among others. The *rodeo*, a creole sport associated to a historical landowning rural oligarchy, was the only activity where female folk singers would still find an artistic stage.

[137] When Margot Loyola first heard the pair sing, she said 'this is chingana cueca,' meaning, a cueca from *popular* taverns/brothels in peripheral urban locations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Claudia Mena, personal communication April 2016). The chingana cueca would correspond today to the urban-popular cueca variant that is also known as cueca brava.

The cantora was also a referent for the urban-popular cuequeros that had been operating in the underground throughout the twentieth century—among which we have seen Mario Catalán, Los Chileneros and Roberto as some relevant examples. With their high-pitched singing and with a considerable part of their repertoires being old cuecas from the countryside, they re-contextualised the cantora's heritage in the urban outskirts where she had landed following rural-urban migration of the early twentieth century. This is the cueca that flourished with extreme strength among post-dictatorship Chilean youths in the mid-1990s, and which has been at the core of the cueca scene ever since; as such, it also enjoys of significant presence in **versions 3** and **4**, both of which eloquently present an impeccable synthesis of these revivalist sounds.

*Figure 4.29*

## La enredadera (1964)

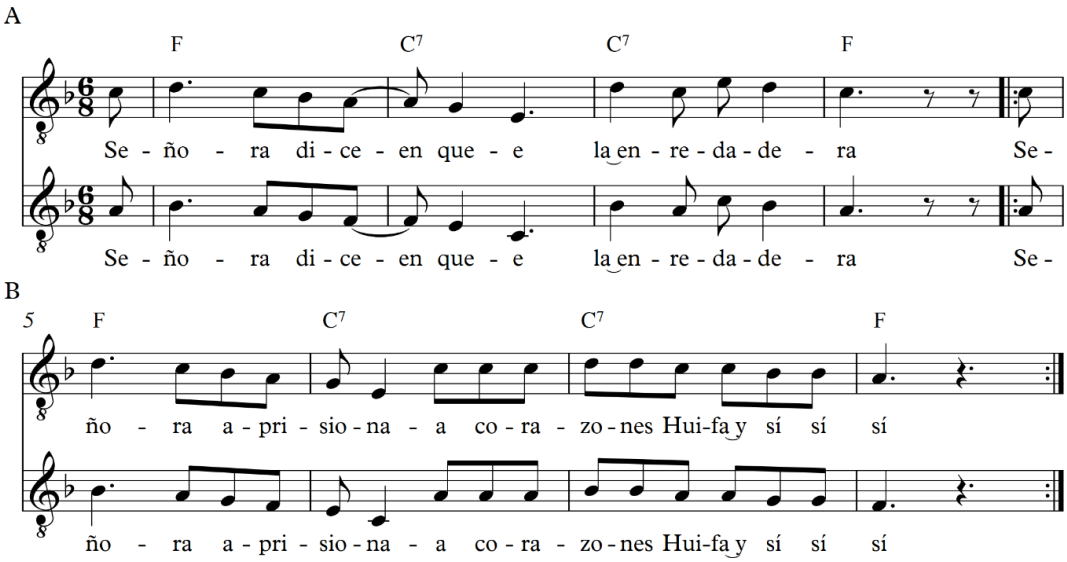



*Figure 4.30*

## La enredadera (1978)

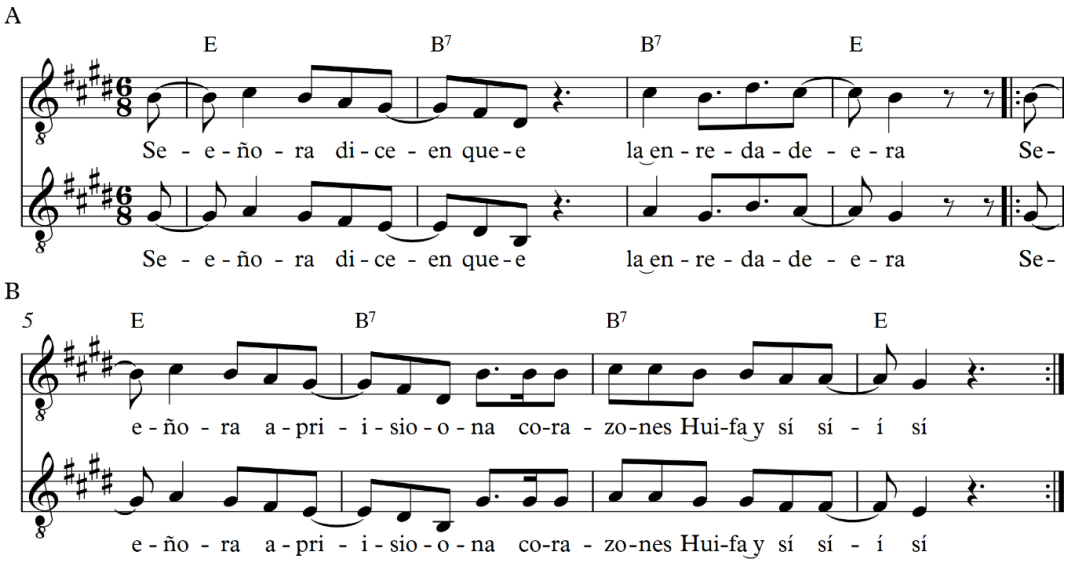


*Figure 4.31*

## La enredadera (2010)

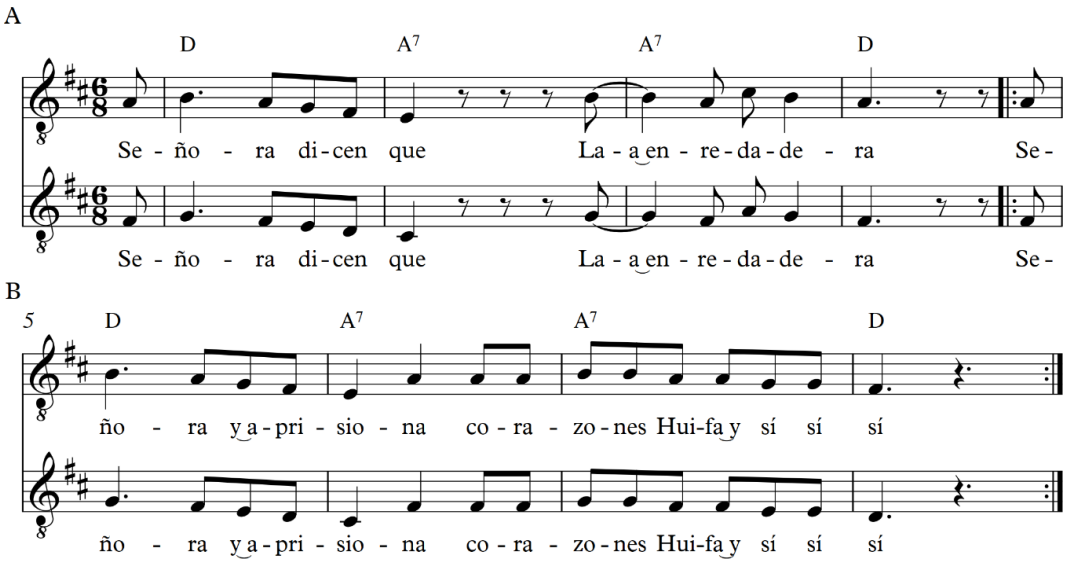
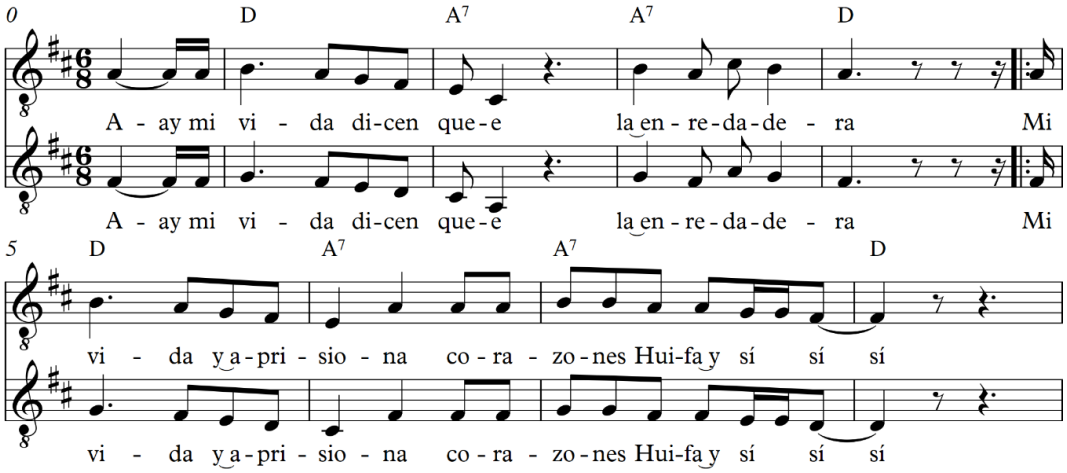



*Figure 4.32*

## La enredadera (2013)



## CONCLUSIONS

The chosen methodology of this chapter aimed to provide an illustrative panorama of the stylistic development of the cueca in Chile throughout the twentieth century, and including the present time, drawing on the rich collection of audio documents dated since 1906 onwards. In 1906 the cueca was still in a phase of transition from the transnational zamacueca to the national cueca. The 1920s represented a revolution for the music industry in Chile, with the radio appearing in 1922, at the same time the first folkloric huaso groups started emerging, with the Guasos de Chincolco initiating a long-standing tradition that still has exponents today. Let us not forget that this was the period of Carlos Ibáñez Del Campo first government (1921-1924)—considered by many to be a dictatorship—and the first time the figure of the huaso would be taken out of context to signify a model of *Chilenidad*, aiming to cement Chilean diversity in this one symbol of national identity. Also during this decade two important record labels—Odeon (later EMI-Odeon) and Victor (later RCA Victor)—started functioning. Then, beginning from the 1940s, there was a diversification of interpreters and styles—with the introduction of the pandero and the tormento into the cueca for the first time around 1940— and it was only then that women would go on stage along with the celebrated huasos, reaching their maximum height as artistic singers in the 1950s. This was a period of left-wing progressive governments—starting gradually with Jorge Alessandri in 1932—which favoured national musical production, and where some significant social reforms took place, many of which enhanced the social conditions of women—who finally achieved the right to vote in 1949. In the 1950s, these social reforms were taken further as social movements and workers' unions developed, and as the middle class grew at an accelerated pace.

The 1960s was an extremely prolific decade for cueca recordings and discographic compilations, with the urban-popular cueca style being taken to the record industry for the first time in 1967. However, in this decade, the musical and the socio-political landscape in Chile began developing. Since 1960 there was a discographic boom from the US in Chile, which provoked a movement called *La Nueva Ola*, drawing on genres such as twist and rock 'n roll as inspiration for the national music production. At the same time, social movements of workers and students were gaining high strength with occupations and strikes taking over the country, a development that culminated in Salvador Allende's political project of the *Unidad Popular* (1970-1973) or 'Popular Union.' In this context, the creole artistic singer would be replaced by engaged song

mostly interpreted by male singers—with some notable exceptions such as Violeta Parra, and her daughter Isabel. This was the breeding ground for the nueva canción movement to appear. As mentioned above, this movement aimed to move away from the creole folkloric style, looking instead for an indigenous and Latin-Americanist referent, in a context where many countries in Latin America were experiencing revolutionary social changes. After Augusto Pinochet's military coup in 1973, the Chilean urban bohemian night was destroyed, and a cultural blackout took place where repression, exile and murder would silence the effervescent musical movement deployed in the 1960s. The folk scene was extremely constrained during this period, with musicians only being able to perform and record under strict state control. Cueca was declared the national dance in 1979 by legal decree, and the huaso figure was installed again as the quintessential symbol of nationality. The nueva canción was, however, able to endure in exile, as well as through the voices of canto nuevo, who little by little were able to preserve their music and their fight.

In 1990, democracy returned to Chile, following the referendum of 1988, which had led to free elections. With the musical scene slowly re-emerging from state control, figures such as *Los Tres*, *Los Santiaguinos*, *Los Chinganeros*, or Mario Rojas would bring to light an urban style of cueca that had been relentlessly relegated to the underground throughout the twentieth century—with a few years' exception. Since then, and through the past almost thirty years, the genre has proliferated, diversified, and found in a post-dictatorship youth, the ideal ground for re-establishing the *fiesta chilena*, the Chilean celebratory drive that is best expressed through the ritual of the cueca.

# CHAPTER 5: *CANTO A LA RUEDA* AND THE REVIVAL OF THE CHILEAN CUECA

## INTRODUCTION

Having presented a detailed overview of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of the cueca, as well as the social and stylistic aspects of its history, the following two chapters (chapters 5 and 6) will delve into more specific elements of the urban-popular cueca revival, namely, social class and gender.

Today in Santiago, Valparaiso, and other urban circuits in Chile that these cities influence, *canto a la rueda* is one of the pivotal practices around which the process of revival of Chilean folkloric traditions has emerged, especially among a generation of young adults who are rediscovering themselves in this cultural expression. This chapter focuses on the urban-popular cueca revival process, which has been unfolding since the 1990s and is still developing in the present. I first examine the concept of music revival as discussed within the existing literature, to understand how the case of the cueca revival can contribute to this discussion. I also delve into the practice of canto a la rueda and discuss its often elevated status as an oral tradition in the context of its belonging to the *popular* classes. I consider the particularities of its development over the recent decades, as informed mostly by my field interviews, participant observations and also some local publications. Finally, I address the cueca revival process in Chile under the light of both theoretical scrutiny and field research material, understanding the tradition of canto a la rueda as a social rite and thus advancing a notion of the cueca as a space of cultural resistance that might revise how we think of musical revivals.

Canto a la rueda constitutes a tradition that entails a specific way of singing the Chilean cueca within a particular context. It is a singing challenge where participants, standing next to one another and forming a circle, must continuously sing cueca songs without repeating lyrics and subjected to a given melody and its particular metrics. Each cueca is sung by four singers: the first one chooses the melody as he sings the copla, the one on his right side must continue with the first seguidilla, then a third one sings the second seguidilla and the last one the remate. Innumerable cuecas go around the circle until one participant fails to sing the cueca under any of the mentioned conditions—either failing to sing or improvise the lyrics in the correct metric and rhyme or failing to sing the melody correctly. These challenges might last for several hours. This is the only cueca form that is not meant to be danced but only sung. This tradition is thought to have been

inherited from the Arab-Andalusian culture that was brought to the continent by the Spanish colonisers. Notably, it is said to have been perpetuated until today by a single family, who now teaches this form of cueca to the new generations of cuequeros in Santiago, and whose emblematic figure is Fernando González Marabolí (1927-2006), to whom I will refer in depth below.

Canto a la rueda can be associated with other improvisatory music-poetic challenges both in Chile and Iberian-America, such as the *paya*[138] (also known as *payada* in Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and Southern Brasil), and more generally with *repentismo* (Spain, Cuba, Brasil, etc.). However, while these forms mostly make use of the poetic form of the *décima*, in canto a la rueda the poetic form is exclusively that of the cueca (copla, seguidillas, remate). The tradition has developed in the margins of Chilean society, with little documentation of its singing styles other than a discographic series that was recorded by EMI-Odeón between 1967 and 1973 called *El Folklore Urbano*, and its living practitioners who have learned it within their familiar environments. It is a form of singing the cueca that reflects the lives and customs of *el pueblo* through language—mixing Spanish with *coa*, the slang of the streets and jail in Chile—the topics sung about, the venues and neighbourhoods where it takes place, and its singing and performing styles. This tradition has given rise to the urban-popular variant of the cueca, known by such names as *cueca brava*, *cueca chilenera*, or *cueca centrina*.

## MUSIC REVIVAL AND THE ARTS OF RESISTANCE

Tamara Livingston (1999) undertook the task of comparatively analysing different music revival cases around the world—including her own project on *choro*[139] in Brazil—being able to come up with a detailed characterisation of the concept of music revival, which she defined as 'any social movement with the goal of restoring and preserving a musical tradition which is believed to be disappearing or completely relegated to the past.' According to the author, the movements' purpose most commonly had to do with providing 'an alternative to mainstream culture' and improving 'existing culture' by emphasising the principles of 'historical value and authenticity' (68). Such a pursuit of authenticity would be the central force behind music revivals, and the notion of folk understood as those traditions coming from 'a mythical people living in a land and time far removed from modern society' (74) would play an essential role in the construction

[138] See glossary.
[139] *Choro* in this context refers to a Brazilian musical genre, and has nothing to do with the *cueca chora*.

of this category. She further explained that such movements were often deployed by middle-class groups which exhibited 'Tendencies to categorize aspects of culture into "modern" and "traditional," and to objectify, rationalize and commodify various aspects of life' (77).

In an attempt to explain why such elite groups would value and concentrate on the everyday cultural practices of 'the folk,' Mark Slobin (2011) has related this to the idea that it would all have originated in 'two main trends of the emerging modern world—identity-seeking and institution-building, and two agendas—the nationalist and the universalist' (51). As seen in chapter 3, the understanding of folklore as a device for national cohesion and control is not a new one, and as Slobing remarks: 'The intelligentsia quickly realized that folk music could help shape society in their own image' (53). Moreover, he asserted that governments have always been involved in the regulation of folk music under the interest of both 'promoting internal cohesion' and 'stimulating exportable culture' (59). Ideas of both internal cohesion and exportable culture intersect with the construction of national identity.

In the case of the Chilean cueca, this is well documented. As explained in previous chapters, one emblematic case was when it was declared the national dance by Legal Decree in 1979 under Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990). The decree prescribes, among other things, that cueca is the Chilean national dance; that it has to be promoted by the Educational and Cultural institutions of the State; and that there will be an annual national dance championship for students throughout the whole country. As a result, one specific style of cueca was favoured and spread across the entire national territory, which followed a creole model that stylised and 'cleansed' traditional rural expressions, and which is most commonly known as the *cueca huasa*.[140]

Richard Middleton (2007) similarly affirmed that music revivals are often put in motion by groups in a position of power, as he showed how in the case of the blues revival of the 1950s and 1960s in the United States, what was actually going on was related to a process of folklorisation which 'assumed the force of a movement' (52). Revivalists would have constructed a narrative of the historical purity of music that was lost and could only be found in a sort of immemorial past, and such a tale was even absorbed by the

[140] Let us not forget that the concept of huaso refers to the Chilean common peasant, and also to an archetype of the ideal Chilean subject, created by elites to reinforce a national identity based on their own bucolic, landowning nostalgia and their class interests.

bearers of the musical traditions that were being revived. This narrative would operate through the mechanisms of nostalgia, which Middleton described as follows:

> This structure—the lost object forever fleeing through the psycho-cultural strata—maps precisely to the structure of nostalgia. Densely layered, without clear origin, or else with an origin repressed from view, the nostalgic moment in its typical obsessive repetition may be identified, using Freudian-Lacanian terminology, as a species of fantasy, its object located within the 'acting out' of a fantasy scene. In this sense, nostalgia is actually emblematic of modernity, for it is the fracturing of tradition that brings forth this particular figuring of loss. (57)

In a similar vein, Ray Allen (2010) argued about the construction of tradition, which 'involves "an ongoing process of interpreting and reinterpreting the past" through a kind of cultural editing,' where revivalists would seek to reproduce their own 'selective view of the past.' Cultural editing would then be an important revivalist mechanism, which according to the author, involved the materialisation of the pursuit of authenticity (277).

Authenticity, folklore, nostalgia, and tradition would then be the critical elements around which a revivalist movement would operate to reproduce its own version of the past. Belonging to an educated middle-class is also vital to all of these authors, as well as the existence of the tradition bearers—the 'source musicians' in Livingston's terminology—who are constituted as objects of the narratives at play, and who also, however, appropriate such narratives subjectively, thus transforming the revival products. Of course, these movements are much more complicated as they often do not follow a single path and neither are they promoted by one homogenous revivalist force. According to Allen, Mark Slobin himself questioned the applicability of the term revival 'because culture does not generally proceed in a linear fashion where expressive forms completely die out and must be brought back to life on a regular basis' (2010, 301). Moreover, if we only follow the logic of dominant groups operating behind revival movements that take folk practices as devices to build collective identities in accordance with their own 'fantastic' and selective versions of the past, we are not adequately addressing the responses or reactions of musicians and practitioners of the music that is taken as the object of the revival process, but instead making them also objects of the revival movement. In the case of the development of the Chilean cueca and especially that of canto a la rueda, we will see that revival has, on the contrary, been pushed forward by both 'core revivalists' and 'source musicians.' We will see how the exaltation of the quality of oral tradition in the world and practice of canto a la rueda has played a crucial role for the definition of the cueca and the proposal of an alternative history of the republic formation.

According to Eric Hobsbawm (1992), the national identities that are built through folk devices are not only shaped by dominant groups' ideologies, but also by the cultural dispositions of the ordinary peoples (*lo popular*) that constitute the social environment. And such dispositions are not necessarily permeated by the 'national consciousness' created by the groups in power, which is why it is so important to consider them and understand their own characteristics, and what is at stake for them in the development of folk traditions. Let us remember what historian Gabriel Salazar (1985) stated in relation to the ideas of *el pueblo*[141] and *popular* agency. He presented one of the meanings of *el pueblo* as the 'alienation drama' suffered by a part of society that has been historically marginalised. As this drama is only lived by one part of the nation, this is the only part that can develop a 'sense of solidarity,' which in contrast to the sense of 'homeland,' gives rise to collaborative relationships that enable the real historical power held by *el pueblo*.

Resistance is a concept that I have found helpful to understand the mechanisms in which the canto a la rueda has operated historically. Being located in a marginal social position, it has developed eluding the elites control or participation. James C. Scott (1990) argues that in general subordinate classes will shape their public behaviour to suit the expectations of dominant groups. According to this behaviour shaping, those emotions, thoughts and truths that can be publicly exhibited would be called 'public transcript,' while what must remain concealed on the interest of survival would be called the 'hidden transcript.' The author goes on to explain that one of the ways in which political discourse among subordinate groups operate is by cleverly moving in between these two states—the public and the hidden transcripts:

> This is a politics of disguise and anonymity that takes place in public view but is designed to have a double meaning or to shield the identity of the actors. Rumor, gossip, folktales, jokes, songs, rituals; codes, and euphemisms—a good part of the folk culture of subordinate groups—fit this description. (18-19)

Folk practices, understood as the practices of *el pueblo*, thus become vehicles of resistance where subordinate groups can express their truths without fear of any social or political consequences. Such practices provide the required anonymity in order to achieve freedom of expression, and it is this capability that is able to sustain cultural traditions throughout centuries. One way in which such practices contribute to this freedom of *popular* expression is the carnival. According to Scott, 'what is most interesting about

[141] See glossary.

carnival is the way it allows certain things to be said, certain forms of social power to be exercised that are muted or suppressed outside this ritual sphere' (173). I argue that the festive character of the cueca and the carnivalesque nature of canto a la rueda—which, as we will see, is understood in the field as a social rite—can be conceived as historical spaces of resistance that today continue to serve the interests of *popular* groups. In the words of Daniel Muñoz, 'the cueca is meant to be part of the national *fiesta*, to be a national catharsis.' Dominant classes have historically subjected the *pueblo chileno*, and 'today it is the same with another name, so the great catharsis of this suffering *pueblo*, is its *fiesta*' (Videla 2010).

I will address how the operations of selective reconstruction of the past and identity construction by core revivalists that are often in privileged positions, interact with the mechanisms of resistance of those who are practitioners of the tradition that is taken as the object of the revival. One of the traditions that revivalists have relied upon with most insistence is that of canto a la rueda. Let us now review its history and the discourses that have placed it at the centre of a sort of mythological narrative that provides meaning and content to this revivalist project.

## CANTO A LA RUEDA: THE ORIGINS

The academic study of the origins of Chilean folk music practices has developed several different theories, but most authors have eventually opted for Spanish-mestizo narratives, by which certain stylistic features would be emphasised. Today in most urban spaces of cueca, the influence that is most prominently being referred to is precisely that of Arab-Andalusian heritage. Most of those studying or participating in the current field of urban-popular cueca agree that an inaugural moment of this revival process was an encounter between the academic world and the world of oral tradition, materialised in the working companionship between the scholar Samuel Claro Valdés (1934-1994) and the autodidact researcher and butcher Fernando González Marabolí. Their joint effort, which started in the late 1970s, gave rise to the popularisation of a style and a historical discourse that had hitherto been disregarded in mainstream discussions about national identity.

Fernando González Marabolí was born into a family of butchers in a *popular* neighbourhood in Santiago. The early twentieth-century industrial neighbourhoods of both Santiago and Valparaíso were the breeding grounds for one particular style of cueca to develop, which has now come to be called cueca brava, cueca chilenera, or simply, urban-popular cueca (see figs. 0.1 and 0.2). González, therefore, grew up in a context

where this cueca was cultivated as an everyday practice. He was both a practitioner and a researcher, and he was able to gather a tremendous amount of information regarding fellow practitioners and orally transmitted repertoires, thus generating his own original theories.

Samuel Claro Valdés, on the other hand, was a Chilean musicologist who dedicated several years to the study of the cueca, incorporating new elements to consider in its research. In 1976 he started publishing articles about Chilean traditional music in the Culture section of a prominent national newspaper (*El Mercurio*). Soon after that, Fernando González approached him, to tell him how productive it would be to join the written tradition of academia (Claro's contribution) with the oral tradition of *popular* neighbourhoods and family customs (his own contribution). Between 1983 and 1989, after years of collaboration with González, Claro published three monographs about so far unexplored aspects of the Spanish influence of cueca, and in 1994 he published a book called *Chilena o Cueca Tradicional. According to the teachings of Fernando González Marabolí*, a fundamental resource that remains a sort of cueca 'bible.'

In the second chapter of this book, González provides a definition of canto a la rueda—referring to it also as *canto a la daria*—as 'high and sonorous melodies, with a mixture of instruments and cut sounds, for choirs of four voices that are above normal ranges' that are 'sung by 12 or 16 men, and which is slow, quite like religious [singing], psalmody, or a singing school' (1994, 78-79). Here González draws a distinction between canto a la rueda and cueca, the latter referring to 'the one of four singers that is used for the dance' (79). To put it in simple words, both cueca and canto a la rueda represent the same musical practice in different contexts. Currently speaking, while the cueca generally occurs on a stage and for an audience to dance along, the canto a la rueda takes place in more exclusive social gatherings, where there is no audience but only practitioners (participants of the rueda or circle). Of course, this delimitation is quite an artificial one as most of the times these two ways of practising the cueca are tightly connected. And such a division is grounded on social class and its corresponding urban geographies. In other words, the practice of canto a la rueda corresponds historically to a particular way of practising the cueca in specific industrial neighbourhoods. And those neighbourhoods are *Matadero* (slaughterhouse neighbourhood in Santiago), *La Vega* (concentrating the main food markets in Santiago), *Estación Central* (central train station in Santiago), and *Puerto* (basically the neighbourhood surrounding part of the port in Valparaíso) (see Figs. 0.1 and 0.2). It is in the proximities of these particular neighbourhoods that the famous

venues for the urban-popular cueca flourished in the early twentieth century. Such places were called *casas de canto* (roughly meaning 'houses for singing'), and consisted of taverns or brothels—most generally hosted by women—with paid live musicians singing, performing, and, of course, taking part in the revelry until dawn. There was no division between the *performance* of the cueca and the *ruedas* then. Ruedas could take place in the urban nightlife as much as amid daily activities.

As narrated by one of the most important figures of the scene and founder of *Los Chileneros*—a seminal band in the urban-popular cueca tradition—Hernán (Nano) Núñez Oyarce (1914-2005), in the documentary *La Bitácora de Los Chileneros*: '*panderos*, *tormentos*, coffee plates, mussel shells, (…) the *roto* found whatever [was at his reach] (…) and started to *tañar* [or to beat]' (Rojas 1998). Also, as told by Mario Rojas in the documentary film *Cuequero* (2010), in these neighbourhoods there were no cueca bands, the cueca was part of the *fiesta*, 'and the *cuequero* was on his own, cueca bands did not exist until *Los Chileneros* (…) who were largely a montage for this production,' referring to the first EMI-Odeon record of *Los Chileneros* in 1967 (Videla, 2010). Some years later, under the dictatorship (1973-1990), this type of cueca was buried under the new cultural schemes installed by the military. As Raúl Lizama, another member of Los Chileneros, remembers, 'the *casas* died in 1973 when the coup came. The bohemian night died then' (Rojas 1998). The death of the bohemian night also meant the death of 'a certain way of life' which according to Araucaria Rojas (2009) would only come back as memory or conscious representation, leaving Santiago as a 'sad phantasmagory, deprived of its former uproar' (69). After the restitution of democracy in 1990, the canto a la rueda and its performative version of urban-popular cueca have proliferated among the young cuequeros of Chile's most significant urban centres—in particular, Santiago, Valparaíso and Concepción—both intimately intertwined in this process of regeneration.

Beyond Chile, the practice of canto a la rueda can be traced through the established tradition of improvisatory *popular* poetry that has been widespread in Latin America since the arrival of the first European explorers, and which finds in Europe and Asia even earlier data. As mentioned above, one of its most extended versions throughout Latin America is today called *paya* or *canto a lo poeta*,[142] which emerged from the art of ancient troubadours. Canto a la rueda would then be the connecting link between the cueca and the paya traditions. The lengthy Moorish presence in Spain right before the first European

[142] See glossary.

overseas exploring missions provides more potential historical associations. In fact, what Claro and González very passionately believed was that there is a straight relation between the Umayyad dynasty's cultural heritage and the practice of canto a la rueda (see Claro 1994, 34-41). Under Claro's view, the form of the cueca form would be related to three different poetic-musical forms which belonged to the medieval Arab heritage within Spanish cultural history, namely, *muwashshah*, *zajal*, and *kharja*. Regarding the music, the author mentions the influence of *nuba*, a kind of suite which combines several pieces. Nuba 'has the sense of turn' (1994, 35), and it would be related to canto a la rueda in terms of the way it is sung in turns by the singers. The sense of turn is in the very name of canto a la rueda, *rueda* meaning 'wheel,' alluding how the singers are positioned in a circle, passing around the singing turns. This circulating singing can go on for a whole night and depending on how the challenge develops it might last for several days. This is why the wisdom of the cuequero or *cantor* lies, among other things, in the amplitude of the repertoire he masters, as well as their ability to improvise in the correct metrical form. Nano Núñez was proud of mastering a vast amount of repertoires, which owed to the fact that he, as some of his singing companions, were wandering around all 'the neighbourhoods,' which gave them 'more material. And that has been the sharpness of the *cuequeros*, having a lot of material, just like the *payador*' (Rojas 1998).

In relation to these poetic dexterities, Rodrigo Torres (2003) adds a number of aptitudes the *popular* cantor needs to develop in order to be seen as a respected performer, such as 'to start in *primera* [or first],' which means to do the leading vocals, 'to roll up, to cheer, to *segundear*' which means singing a second vocal line, often a third below the lead singer, and to '*tañar*,' or to strike (percuss) whatever they have at hand—in case there are no instruments—with the particular flavour of the cueca rhythm. He also explains how the cantor needs to develop 'the cuequera voice (*el pito* [or whistle]) and memorise[143] the repertoire' (155). Speaking of the cuequera voice, another important characteristic of the cueca singing—which is again thought to have been inherited from the Arab-Andalusian culture—is the melismatic singing, very common to 1960s urban cuecas in Santiago and Valparaíso. Julio Alegría (1981) defines this type of singing as 'a vocal escalation much used in Arab masculine songs and the Andalusian "Cante-Hondo." Our cueca is melismatic. Its singers, with powerful and sharp voices, compete in volume and embellishments to the melodic line' (127). Luis Castro González, one of the direct

[143] Original text says 'memorises.'

inheritors of Fernando González Maraboli's legacy, can conclude these remarks by affirming that

> Cueca, thus, comes from a cultural encounter with the *popular* Andalusian world, which became entrenched in the Chilean lower classes during the colonial period, being a faithful witness of the experiences of the Chilean peoples, even before the independence war. It was the 'Roto,' who emerged from the miscegenation between the indigenous woman and the Spanish man, the character who made the poetry and the deep [melismatic] singing prevail. (2010, 39)

## URBAN-POPULAR CUECA: ORAL TRADITION?

The narrative of the cueca as an Arab-Andalusian tradition purely preserved among *el pueblo* in Chile has been adopted by several individuals who have one way or another contributed to the dissemination of this practice among urban Chilean youths. During the 1950s and 1960s, a folkloric boom was taking place across Latin America, to which we can attribute several factors. The rise of commercial radios and recording industries on the one hand, of musical protest movements on the other, and a growing academic interest in folk traditions that led to the institutionalisation of these musical practices and their transmission through education. The cueca was thus experiencing an incredibly prolific period, especially in the 1960s, with the publishing of countless albums by numerous flourishing artists. Some famous artists and groups of those years were *Dúo Rey-Silva*, Mario Catalán, *Trío Añoranzas*, *Los Hermanos Campos*, *Los Huasos Quincheros*, *Los Perlas*, *Dúo María-Inés*, *Los Hermanos Lagos*, *Las Morenitas*, *Cuncumén*, Silvia Infantas, *Los Baqueanos* (who later became *Los Cóndores*), Ester Soré, *Los Labradores*, *Los Hermanos Parra*, etc.

During these years, several different styles cohabited the cueca scene. Anglo music had been strongly permeating the Chilean soundscapes since 1960 so the creole style that ruled the scene for so many decades had to make room for innovative emerging styles. Musical movements such as *neofolklore*[144] and the *nueva canción*[145] were born in this decade. Also, the music of urban-popular neighbourhoods was gaining recognition in the music industry, so much so, that between 1967 and 1973 the EMI-Odeon label recorded seven volumes dedicated to urban-popular cueca. The series was called *El Folklore Urbano*. As González and Rolle (2005) affirm, the hegemonic constructions of national identity in Chile have mainly focused on the cueca huasa, or creole cueca, while urban-popular cueca was mostly unknown or ignored. Chilean elites harboured a historical fear and rejection towards the free expression of *popular* culture, which at times

[144] See glossary.
[145] See glossary.

could be seen by them as 'voluptuous and even violent' (395). Notwithstanding, already by the 1950s, this cueca was sneaking into the recording industry, and a pivotal figure to this entrance was Mario Catalán Portilla (1913-1979). Belonging to the industrial neighbourhood of *La Vega* in Santiago, Catalán was an icon of the singing style of the urban *cantor*—what we know today as the cuequero style—and he constituted a model for many other singers to come. An impeccable singer and composer, he recorded for the first time in 1951 along with the famous *Dúo Rey-Silva*, including his own compositions 'Aló, aló,' 'Arremángate el vestido,' 'Mi caserita,' and 'Desde que vine al mundo,' all of which would turn to be exceptionally influential for future cuequero generations up to the present. Another essential figure whose cuecas began to get recorded the 1950s was the aforementioned Nano Núñez. The first of his cuecas to be found in a record is 'Los Campeones,' which was part of a compilation of cuecas published in 1953 by RCA Víctor label. His cuecas were recorded by some of the most mainstream folk groups of the 1960s, such as Los Huasos Quincheros and Silvia Infantas. Also an industrial worker, Nano Núñez was a singer and composer of not only cueca but also tango, Peruvian waltz (or vals peruano), and other Latin American genres that were part of Santiago's bohemian night. Thus, by the time Rubén Nouzeilles, the artistic director of EMI-Odeón in those years, initiated his discographic series El Folklore Urbano, this cueca already had a place in the music industry.

The first three volumes of this series were recorded in 1967. Volume I is '20 cuecas con salsa verde,' a compilation of cuecas mostly written by Fernando Báez Parra (most commonly known as Nano Parra), and sung by the *Trío Los Parra* which was formed by Hilda Parra, her son Nano and her daughter María Elena. According to the director of the online discographic archive of cueca, Felipe Solís, this record is crucial as it was the first one to describe the everyday life at the margins of society, primarily focusing on delinquency and the lives of outlaws (Solís Poblete, Cancionero de Cuecas. Noticias n.d.). This album is followed by Volume II, with Roberto Parra's own compositions, 18 of which were put together in this LP called 'Las Cuecas de Roberto Parra.' As we will see below, Roberto Parra has been a highly influential figure for the revitalisation of urban cueca. Due to his unmistakable way of interpreting folk music, his style was baptised as *cueca chora*,[146] a term that would come to represent the whole

[146] See glossary.

spectrum of urban-popular cueca from the bohemian port city of Valparaíso.[147] Volume III is 'La Cueca Centrina' by Los Chileneros. This album could be regarded as the seminal record of the new cuequero movement. Due to its relevance for the movement, today there are contending views about how this group was formed and who the key characters behind the production of this first album were. It was the first time that cantores from the industrial neighbourhoods of Santiago were gathered in a recording studio. In fact, as a group, Los Chileneros had several different formations due to internal quarrels between its members. In general, during those years these singers were not used to participating in stable bands, but rather circulated spontaneously through Santiago's nightlife venues and performed with whomever was present at any given occasion. Moreover, the cantores used to gather around their workplaces, where they would spontaneously form *ruedas* of cuecas (i.e. canto a la rueda). Thus, the first version of Los Chileneros was formed by Hernán 'Nano' Núñez, Luis 'Baucha' Araneda, Raúl 'Perico' Lizama, and Eduardo Mesías, in addition to other guest musicians. On the following year, and in a slightly different formation which included the accordionist Carlos 'Pollito' Navarro, Los Chileneros recorded volume IV, 'La Cueca Brava.' The name 'Cueca Brava' was given by the record label, and some years later the whole urban-popular cueca style came to be represented by this name. In 1969 two of Los Chileneros's original members formed the Mesías-Lizama duet and recorded volume V of the series, named 'La Cueca Centrina.' Then in 1971, Lizama recorded once again, now the sixth volume of the series, with Luis Araneda and two new members, father and son Luis Téllez Viera and Luis Téllez Mellado, under the name of *Los Centrinos*. Finally, in 1973 and once more in a different formation, the originals Hernán Núñez and Carlos Navarro got together with Luis Téllez Viera, Julio Alegría and Miguel Córdova and recorded volume VII, called 'Así fue la época de oro de la cueca chilenera.'

These seven volumes represent the editorial effort for bringing this underrepresented style of music which according to EMI-Odeón's artistic director needed

[147] All of the Parra people mentioned here belong to the Parra Sandoval family, a family of exceptionally prolific and talented siblings who have left an indelible mark on Chilean musical culture. The most famous character of this family is the composer, singer and researcher Violeta Parra Sandoval (1917-1967). Hilda (1916-1975) and Violeta formed the duet *Las Hermanas Parra*, which functioned between 1947 and 1953, and in the late 1960s she formed the *Trío Los Parra* along with her son Nano Parra and her daughter María Elena Báez Parra. Roberto (1921-1995) was their younger brother, and he developed original musical and dramatic creations associated to the circus, theatre and *popular* music.

to be recognised as 'Chile's legitimate folkloric daughter' (Solís Poblete, Cancionero de Cuecas. Noticias n.d.).

Now, another fundamental cueca group that was crucially involved in this process, and whose history is not as well documented as that of Los Chileneros, is *Los Chinganeros*. This group was founded by Fernando González Marabolí around 1942. As part of the same scene of *popular* neighbourhoods and industrial activity in the cities of Santiago and Valparaíso, this group shared many of the members of Los Chileneros—to whose formation González also contributed—and many cuecas—e.g. the 1967 LP of Los Chileneros contained quite a few cuecas written by Fernando González Marabolí. González belonged to a dynasty of cuequeros from both Valparaíso and Santiago, and today his nephew Luis Castro González (1968-) continues to develop this family legacy. Luis Castro is the director of Los Chinganeros, and along with family members and friends, they are working for the popularisation of canto a la rueda and its dignification as national heritage. In an interview, he explained to me the origins of this practice:

> It arrives with the Conquest of America, with Andalusian Moors, who are brought by Cristopher Columbus as 'cannon meat,' as they directed from behind, while the others [Andalusian moors] go to war, to die. But searching for their freedom, so they joined the indigenous peoples, and as they were from another world, they taught them about their weapons. They formed families with the women, as it was men who came. Also, this whole culture became fused, brave and with ancestral knowledge; the race becomes fused and they form a stronger race, which today we know as the 'roto chileno,' the *mestizaje*. In olden days, those who were fierce were called 'toros caitas,' which means 'fierce roto' [or *roto bravo*[148]]; because of their build, with wide backs and narrow torso, and they were really strong. This mestizo race also had the singing genetics. Besides from learning within your family the vocal placement, the verses, and all the knowledge, it comes in your genes, in your blood. You later start to develop what you have learned. So they came with all these genetics, and thus the canto a la duara or canto a la daira arrived later, which in Chilean words is called canto a la rueda. (Personal communication, 10th April 2016)

Drawing from oral tradition, Los Chinganeros seek to be the living memory of canto a la rueda as it was practised by their ancestors. After the last members of Los Chileneros passed away—the last one being Baucha in 2014—Los Chinganeros are the oldest practitioners in Santiago of this urban-popular cueca tradition, which they are passing along to younger generations. Their work as educators as well as guardians of this tradition has played a significant role in the revival process that is still developing today, along with other external and internal developments that I will describe in the following section.

As we have seen, oral tradition takes high relevance in relation to the transmission of folklore. However, it is worth at least questioning the idea of urban-popular cueca and

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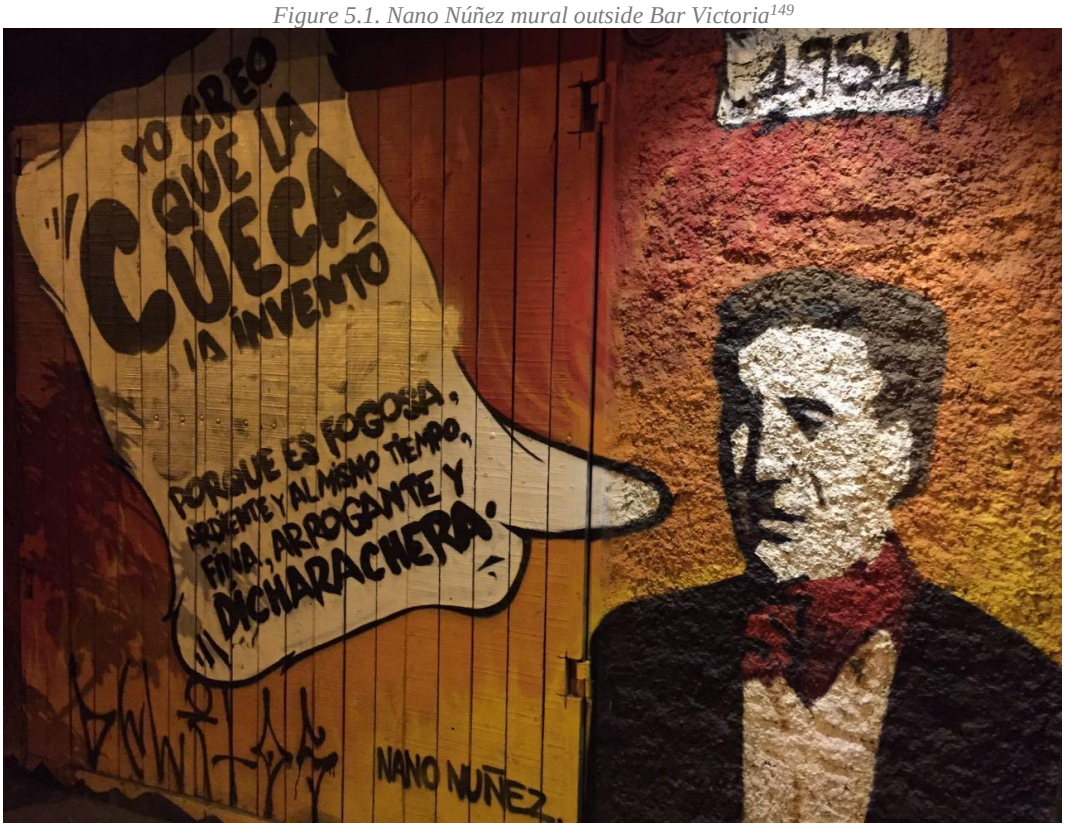
[148] See glossary.

canto a la rueda as purely coming from oral tradition, because, as discussed earlier, the cueca discographic archive offers strong evidence of this style being part of a highly mediated musical environment since at least 1951. Furthermore, as the director of the online discographic archive of cueca Felipe Solís told me in an interview, referring to Los Chileneros,

> The old men were born listening to records, Nano Núñez when he referred to old bands he was also referring to their recordings, (…) and Los Chileneros, and especially Nano was a person who was, who wanted to participate in the recording industry, the show business and the artistic world. (Personal communication, 25th January 2017)

It was Solís who through his archive, made possible the awareness of Hernán Núñez's early presence in the recording industry which, as discussed earlier appeared already in 1953 with the cueca 'Los Campeones.' Thus, although the environment of industrial neighbourhoods such as La Vega, Matadero, and Estación Central in Santiago, as well as Barrio Puerto in Valparaíso, was a tremendously fertile ground for these musical practices to develop, they did not do so in complete isolation. Indeed, the path of the cueca has always been intervened by external actors such as musical producers or people who were related to mass communication media, and the same can be said about its most recent developments since its regeneration process began in the 1990s.

*Figure 5.1. Nano Núñez mural outside Bar Victoria*[149]




*Source: Fieldwork photos and documents, 2016*

## External developments: two crucial encounters

When discussing the socio-political context that led to the emergence of a revival process, one must not forget one of the most potent and life-changing events in recent Chilean history: the military dictatorship inaugurated by Augusto Pinochet's coup d'état on 11th September of 1973. While it is true that many aspects of Chilean cultural life were steadily blossoming in the decade leading to the military coup, there was also a climate of political polarisation that was bolstered by the increasing economic instability of those years. In such a context, Salvador Allende reached the presidency in 1970 with a little over a third of the votes, so he had to face fierce opposition as he attempted to install his socialist project—which in truth was the evolution of a left-wing effort that had already started in 1939 when the *Frente Popular* party had reached the executive. His mandate was loyally accompanied by an effervescent musical-political movement called *La Nueva Canción Chilena*, and this was the context in which the cueca and creole music lost their

[149] The missing word on the mural is *Satanás* (Satan), and the phrase corresponds to a famous saying by which Nano Núñez used to define the cueca (and women): 'Yo creo que la cueca la inventó Satanás, porque es ardiente y fogosa, y al mismo tiempo fina, arrogante y dicharachera,' which translates into 'I think the cueca was invented by Satan, because it is hot and fiery, and at the same time, fine, arrogant and fascinating.' (Emol 2010)

appeal among audiences that were increasingly drawn towards more socially-engaged music. Thus, when three years later the military seized the power, one of their first measures was to exclude—be it via censorship, exile or murder—this political music and most of what could be even remotely related to a left-wing political agenda. As a consequence, as many cuequeros have said, 'Santiago's bohemian night died,' along with most of the venues that used to offer folk music such as *peñas*[150] and *casas de canto*. As seen, the sponsored folk style during these years was that which depicted the *huaso* tradition, i.e. creole music, which was taken as a symbol of the Chilean national identity. In consonance with this nationalist effort, the cueca was legally baptised by Pinochet as the national dance of Chile by a legal decree that underlined its quality of representative of an authentic and unitary national identity (N°23 Decree, 1979).

During these years, urban-popular cueca did not completely disappear, but it had to be practised in private and clandestine spaces. As the owner of the legendary venue *La Casa de la Cueca*, María Esther Zamora, remembered,

> The year 1950 was a boom, there was the *Pollo Dorado* [boîte], and cueca was in everything; then this neo-folklore thing came, and the cueca began to decline. And later [with the dictatorship], it was terrible because there were no venues to show the work, they had all been shut down. So then [the cueca] became practically clandestine, but they would not defeat us just for that (…); [we practised the cueca] in private houses, mostly clandestinely (…), doors were shut and you would go back home next morning. (…) Many people were avid, and their only joy was to listen to our music because most of the venues in which it used to be played were closed. So we just continued with the cueca clandestinely. (María Ester Zamora, personal communication, 7th April 2016)

[150] The word *peña* is thought to be derived from the *Mapudungún* (language of the Mapuche people—see above) *peñi*, which means 'brother.' It consists of a social gathering of musicians, poets and folklorists who perform in front of a small audience who are usually seated in tables and served traditional Chilean food in an intimate environment. All peñas were shut down during the military dictatorship (1973-1990).

*Figure 5.2. María Ester Zamora at Casa de la Cueca*


*Source: Fieldwork photos and documents, 2017*

Already in 1984, a new group was founded, of which we could say was the first group of young musicians who became interested in reproducing the Chilenero cueca sound. Their name is *Los Afuerinos*, and they were based in Valparaíso. They learned directly from Nano Núñez, whom they invited to spend some days in Valparaíso in order to absorb his knowledge on cueca and *popular* music (García n.d.). A second group, from Santiago, followed some years later in 1993, whose name is *Altamar*. Then, several groups appeared, such as *Los Palmeros de Rancagua* (1994), *Los Trukeros* (1997), *Las Torcazas* (1998), Los Santiaguinos (1998), Los Tricolores (2000), Las Capitalinas (2001) and *La Gallera* (2006). These cueca bands—all of whom remain active—are today a referent for most of the cuequeros and cuequeras who followed.

Now, what happened in the 1990s that made possible the rise of such a movement? First, the dictatorship ended in 1990. A referendum was held in 1988, offering citizens the choice to remain under Pinochet's rule or to hold democratic elections. The result was a majority vote for the latter and in 1989 Patricio Aylwin was elected the new president of Chile, officially starting his term in March 1990. With the return to democracy, Chilean youths slowly but steadily began to search for new cultural referents and to get more actively involved in Chilean cultural life. In this context, two encounters made possible the revitalisation and popularisation of cueca among post-dictatorship youths. One was that between the recently founded rock band *Los Tres* and Roberto Parra, and the other was between the musician and producer Mario Rojas and the members of Los Chileneros.

As mentioned above, Roberto Parra was born into a family of some of the most prolific musicians and creators of the twentieth century in Chile. He grew up in the countryside, absorbing the peasant musical traditions cultivated by his parents and then migrated to Santiago at a very young age. Once in the capital, Parra and his siblings used to perform in different settings, from small local circuses to elegant boîtes,[151] and Roberto himself grew up to be an outstanding musician and *popular* poet, who has left his *décimas* and cuecas as a legacy of urban-popular life. In 1988 one of the plays he had written ('La Negra Ester') was produced by the *Gran Circo Teatro* company, which featured a musical ensemble that included one of the founding members of Los Tres, Álvaro Henríquez (1969-). Since then, an endearing friendship and working companionship began between the two. Los Tres was a rock band formed in 1987 which enjoyed massive popularity among young audiences, and many cuequeros attribute to them the beginning of the cueca revival process. Hernán Rojas, cuequero from *Los Nogalinos*, explained it as follows:

> (…) in the year 1990, in my perception, I might be wrong, Los Tres, in an MTV unplugged, launched some cuecas by Roberto Parra, or two cuecas and a *guachaca*[152] jazz. And that switched the 1990s youth on. I wouldn't know how to explain the social reason behind this, but they were captured by it. Maybe due to the way of interpreting it, because we had always seen, during 17 years (those of us who stayed during the dictatorship), a structured cueca, of the huaso with hat and ornaments; or a very *Chilota*[153] cueca. But we haven't seen that 'forbidden' cueca. (Hernán Rojas, personal communication, 1st April 2016)

As folklorist María Ester Zamora also remembered,

> What happens is quite simple. When Álvaro Henríquez begins to sing cuecas, he was a keen admirer of Roberto Parra's work; and so he interiorises all what cueca really is about, he caught the flavour and everything, being at the peak of their fame Los Tres rockers. Thus, he started to study the work of tío Lalo [Parra, Roberto's brother, who also composed cuecas] and began to include cuecas by tío Roberto Parra. Then, he listens to a recording [by my husband] Pepe Fuentes, creator of the group Los Pulentos de la Cueca, with my brother Pedro Zamora, and Jorge Montiel; he liked the way of playing the *pandero*,[154] without knowing where it could lead him. He tried to contact [Pepe] through Sony Music, and then he called us on the phone to get together with Pepe (…) he had no idea that Pepe was cuequero, nor that I was the daughter of a folklorist. We started becoming friends, getting to know each other, going to each other's houses, and then we got together. He invites Pepe to the first 'Yein Fonda,' and he invites me on the second year, because neither did he know that I sang or anything. (María Esther Zamora, personal communication, 7th April 2016)

*Fonda*[155] is the name of the annual independence-day celebrations that take place every 18th of September. Since 1996, Los Tres started organising the 'Yein Fonda,' one more of these annual patriotic festivities, which mainly focused on the hip young people

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[151] See glossary for definition.
[152] See glossary.
[153] From Chiloé island, in the south of Chile.
[154] See glossary for definition.
[155] See glossary.

of those years. So through them, the cueca and urban-popular folk traditions got to be exhibited in platforms—TV, exclusive parties, etc.—and among audiences they might not have reached otherwise. These were young audiences that found in this cueca an alternative to the politically polarised status of folk music in Chile: either creole and right-wing or Andean and left-wing. Born in the outskirts of society, this cueca had a component of challenge and excitement that made it extremely alluring among a generation that was healing from the social trauma left by a long authoritarian period.

*Figure 5.3. Roberto Parra*

*Source: Biblioteca Nacional de Chile (Memoria Chilena 2018)*

Mario Rojas (1951-) was a musician and music producer who also formed part of the 1980s and 1990s pop-rock scene in Chile. His father was also a musician, who used to frequent the environment of urban-popular folk, and therefore Rojas became acquainted with this world at quite a young age. He has been one of the most essential cultural managers behind the popularisation of Los Chileneros and the musical world they represent, by publishing a documentary (1999), some biographic and *popular* poetry books, and the last music album recorded by Los Chileneros (2001)—featuring three of the original members: Nano Núñez, Luis Araneda (Baucha) and Raúl Lizama. Mario also participated in the revitalisation of cueca venues, such as Thursdays at *Huaso Enrique* (pub), which are still going, as he told me in full detail:

> (…) whenever there is a public event, if there is a hip hop group, if there are some punkies, whatever youth you like, could you include *Los Santiaguinos*, man? I mean, cueca, why not? Can there not be a group of cueca? If you see them they have similar formats, with drum kit, the guys play well, they sing well (…), the cueca is *música popular*, let's break up with the scheme that the cueca is something didactic or compulsorily a patriotic symbol. It is *música popular* (…), if there are *tanguerías* [venues to dance tango exclusively], if there are places to dance *salsa*, why isn't there something where people go specifically to dance cueca? (…) Then I said 'I know a place

> called *Huaso Enrique* that's in Maipú Street' (…) and I told [its manager], 'hey, look' I said, 'what would you think if we played on Thursdays (when the place was empty), (…) we can gather musicians, I'll bring musicians.' So we met there on Thursdays and we invited cantores, *Los Santiaguinos*, Cristian Cáceres, etc. (…) with these old men and some money we gave them some cash at least for the taxi. This was so explosive that in two months this thing on Thursdays was full. It was incredible. (Mario Rojas, personal communication, 24th January 2017)

Following Livingston's terminology, both Mario Rojas and Álvaro Henríquez can be understood as part of the 'core revivalists' who, coming from a relatively privileged social position and enjoying of great popularity and fame among Chilean youths, were able to inaugurate a trend that many would want to follow. They thus took these 'source musicians'—Roberto Parra and Los Chileneros—and brought their musical activity to new platforms of diffusion. I would say, however, that neither of them was pursuing a kind of authenticity, but rather novelty: they were both extremely interested in the quality of the music and the particularity of performance styles, which made them rediscover Chilean folk music in a way that for them was new and special. They did not take these source musicians as absolutely disconnected from modernity, but rather as a part of modernity they were not aware of, and which they considered valuable to exhibit.

## Internal developments: Tradicional Escuela Maraboliana

A very different case can be found in a second stage of the revival process: Luis Castro González and his *Tradicional Escuela Maraboliana* (or Traditional Marabolian School). In 2008 Mario Rojas got together with Luis Castro, nephew of Fernando González Marabolí, and they initiated canto a la rueda workshops in Balmaceda 1215 Cultural Centre. These workshops were a huge success, initiating many of the current well-known cuequeros who follow this tradition, such as René Alfaro, Claudia Mena etc. The workshops continued, and over the years, Luis Castro formed his Escuela Maraboliana.

*Figure 5.4. Los Chinganeros (2017)*

*Source: Publicity material shared publicly by Los Chinganeros*

I had the opportunity of attending these workshops for nine weeks in 2016 and five weeks in 2017 (Fig.5.5). Funded by the National Council for Culture and the Arts (now Ministry of Culture), the workshops were led by Luis Castro and his wife, Litzi Mantero, created the methodology. Sessions generally consisted of a brief initial lecture in which Castro would present some technical or historical remarks about the cueca, such as poetic metre, the history of the cueca in relation to the history of Chile, the heritage of the roto Chileno, the ten ways of singing the cuecas,[156] the art of animations or cheers, or the rhythm. Following these introductory lectures, Castro would lead a series of cueca exercises that participants would attempt to copy. He was very insistent on the importance of practising and memorising the cueca lyrics at home to make the most of the workshops, as that was an important mark of cuequero dexterity. I could see part of the evolution of these workshops throughout my fieldwork periods: the first workshops I went to in 2016 were attended by a dozen participants or so, while the ones I attended in 2017 were significantly more crowded, with around 100 to 120 participants each time. Also, the study material was enhanced from one year to the next, and I could see how after a year of doing the same workshops in different districts across Santiago and some other towns and cities, the historical discourse acquired more and more importance. I remember in one of the sessions in March 2016 I had to leave early in order to feed my then 3-month-old son, and one of the organisers approached me to ask me to stay for a bit longer. The information they were about to relate, she said, pertained to the history of Chile and the

[156] This information is a product of Luis Castro's own systematisation of a survey of hundreds of traditional cuecas.

early years of cueca in the nineteenth century. This history was not available anywhere else, as it came from oral tradition. The following year, by January 2017, this information had been revealed to hundreds or even thousands of participants and labelled as the undocumented history of Chile and the *roto chileno*. This cycle of workshops concluded with a National Encounter of Canto a la Rueda on 28th of January 2017, which was typically divided between a morning discussion of cueca, canto a la rueda and the current state of the tradition, and musical presentations in the afternoon. This enabled me to witness how there was a series of workshop participants who had become loyal functionaries of the canto a la rueda cause, having incorporated the terminology and the historical discourse of the Marabolian tradition.[157]

*Figure 5.5. Canto a la Rueda workshop (January 2017)*

*Source: Fieldwork photos and documents, 2017*

Several elements distinguish this case from the latter two. Firstly, the aim of this new (yet old) venture of the Escuela Maraboliana is to safeguard and rescue a tradition they feel is disappearing, as stated in their own study guide:

> [The canto a la rueda] should be considered Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) as it involves the following spheres: oral traditions and expressions; social and ritual practices; knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; traditional craftsmanship. This singing of heaven and earth has been preserved with major purity in Chile, but it is in danger of disappearing. (Los Chinganeros, *Canto a la Rueda y Cosmovisión de la Chilena* study guide)

Secondly, the core revivalists here are not individuals from outside the tradition who, having discovered it, tried to bring traditional practitioners to the foreground. It is rather the practitioners themselves, who are attempting to rescue and disseminate their

[157] For example, they prefer the term *chilena* to refer to the cueca, as they associate the term cueca to an aristocratic tradition that explained the origins of the dance as inherited from the Peruvian *zamacueca*, rather than being the art of the ancestral Chilean roto, the product of miscegenation between the Arab-Andalusian conquerors and native women. This is, for me, one valid interpretation, of the many there are available throughout the literature.

own practice. Meanings and discourses are thus not coming from someone in a privileged social position who is constructing a narrative from her or his external perspectives—such as scholars or people from the music industry might be. Perhaps selective reconstructions of the past are still taking place in this case, but this time from the perspective of practitioners themselves. Let us not forget, however, that this history of the cueca was already mediated by scholars when in the 1970s Fernando González Marabolí got together with the musicologist Samuel Claro Valdés and developed a theory that was systematised in their publication, almost 20 years later, of the book *Chilena o Cueca Tradicional. De Acuerdo con las Enseñanzas de Don Fernando González Marabolí*. The structuring of this book is quite interesting as it reveals the 'clear role distribution' (Jordán González 2011) established between the scholar and the consultant, who, as noted by Jordán, bears an elevated status as representative of oral tradition. The consultant's role as a source prevailed over that of a literate researcher. Even though he is presented as the author of a whole section of the book (section 2)—the core of the book, which presents the results of González's lifetime research combined with his lived experience of cueca—his prose is continuously interrupted by explicative interventions of the scholars in italics, offering re-interpretations and re-codifications of the musician's work. Likewise, even when Fernando González Marabolí mentioned numerous (verifiable) written sources while presenting his theories, none of those were included in the book's references, and therefore 'his knowledge of an extensive bibliographic corpus remains subsumed under the exaltation of his orality.' Thus, he remains a source, from the deep seas of oral tradition. Now, Luis Castro González, building on from his uncle's endeavour, has come to construct a corpus of knowledge that is a combination of his family heritage, his own experiences and reflexions, and the theories exposed in this book, which again, combine musicological theory at an academic level with the experience and research of his uncle. He has acquired the status of one of the few living tradition bearers, which has granted him the special authority of the *maestro*. As synthesised in his workshop study guide:

> We transmit this information with the authority conferred to us by being bearers of this knowledge throughout generations, having fought for the dignity of Canto a la Rueda and the Chilena or Traditional Cueca, of their brave practitioners whose singing was never docile or submissive, despite the persecutions and harassment from dominant classes, who wanted to erase our *popular*[158] customs and traditions.
>
> The teachings of Fernando González Marabolí are not theories, but rather wisdom based in universal laws, exact sciences and eternal truths. (Los Chinganeros, *Canto a la Rueda y Cosmovisión de la Chilena* study guide)

[158] My emphasis.

## Canto a la rueda as a social rite

In order to understand the impact of canto a la rueda over the revival of cueca and folkloric traditions, it is important to remember that, in its origins, canto a la rueda was a specific way of singing the cueca in certain urban-popular neighbourhoods in Santiago and Valparaíso (see fig.s 0.1 and 0.2). This way of singing also corresponded to particular ways of living in the Chile of the 1930s to 1970s, which, after Pinochet's dictatorship, changed forever. Nonetheless, rather than being mere memory reconstructions and representations, the current usages of canto a la rueda respond to new ways in which young cuequeros embrace the *fiesta popular*, which, despite everything, has not remotely ceased to exist. When younger cuequeros—Los Afuerinos (1984), Altamar (1993), Los Trukeros (1997), Los Santiaguinos (1998), Los Tricolores (2000), etc.—began their pilgrimage towards the environment of older 'source musicians'—Nano Núñez, Luis Araneda, Carlos Navarro, etc.—they started learning this way of singing the cueca. However, in the 1990s, new social and economic contexts meant that the cueca had new spaces to be performed at. In other words, the new generation took this urban-popular cueca to the stages, while maintaining the practice of improvisational challenges in a different space. Thus, on stage, the urban-popular cueca would be called cueca brava, chilenera, or chora, and off the stage, in gatherings exclusively integrated by practitioners—no audience—it would be called canto a la rueda. Such off-stage spaces have been described by many of my consultants as spaces where the cueca emerges as a ritual practice. I have not found the exact reason for this separation. I am inclined to think it has to do with a combination between the new post-dictatorship socio-political context, entailing new spaces for the cueca performance, as well as the different social upbringings of young cueca practitioners, who no longer belonged to the four emblematic urban-popular cueca neighbourhoods—however much they inhabited them in their learning processes.[159]

Throughout my interviews with different cuequeros, cantoras and other people related to this revival process, I realised that canto a la rueda was a central force in the movement and that the cueca that most of them practised was stylistically and performatively related to canto a la rueda. Leslie Becerra, cantora, member of the group *Las Primas*, and historian, pointed out the context of the tradition of singing in a circle as

[159] Also, let us not forget that the presence of canto a la rueda in the music industry was short lived, and it was never exactly canto a la rueda: cuequeros were required to gather in cueca bands and perform in an artist-spectator scheme, which, only for this type of cueca, had never been the case before.

a social rite that has been present for centuries in many places in the world. People would be 'singing like that in *rueda* [or circle], and each one sings something that was not necessarily a décima, they could sing anything… cuecas, coplas, they used many formulas because it was about being dexterous, you see?' So she and her cueca group, which also functions as a cueca historical research lab, attributed the Chilenero singing style to a very ancient practice that was not limited to Chile, and which was

> (…) kind of a rite because the circle always symbolises a rite, [like] sitting to smoke (…) or playing cards passed around by the right hand, (…) when there is *mate* [herbal infusion] it is also passed by the right side, so it has quite a ritual sense, not only for the challenge of fighting in verse, many times the singing meant friendly sharing, and they sang one after the other. Later, when the party had become more effervescent, then the challenge appeared. (Leslie Becerra, personal communication, 23rd January 2017)

This sense of social rite, and the social worthiness of the canto a la rueda as an ancient practice and way of being that had been present for so many centuries among the Chilean people, is something that many of the cuequeros and cuequeras found extremely valuable and appealing. For instance, one of the members of the group *De Caramba* explained that what caught his attention was the fact that he felt it as 'a social environment,'

> (…) a spontaneous social environment where there is no venue owner, it is in the street, people go out of pleasure, to dance (…) and it was really alive, people went to dance the steps we were taught at school, it was a social event that interested me with people of all ages and social classes. (Personal communication, 16th January 2017)

Similarly, Fernando from *San Cayetano* emphasised the tremendous social value that he found in this tradition. An apprentice of Luis Castro González and his Escuela Maraboliana, he is a fervent defender of the canto a la rueda tradition. He has formed part of the committee that organises a regular *rueda* in Santiago for some years now, having to face rejection of most venues and neighbourhoods due to the nature of the activity. Basically, organisers regularly announce a rueda via social networks (they currently have a Facebook page) and cuequeros (both new apprentices and old practitioners) attend to sing. They can sum up to 200 people generally gathering in a public space, to sing cuecas from 6 pm till 2, 3, maybe 4 am, in an improvisation challenge that grows louder and more intense as the hours pass by. It is the cueca understood as a social rite, an encounter, a party, a weekly-based carnival—and with no money involved—which no venue has afforded to host for long. Despite the difficulties, Fernando continues to fight for this practice to prevail. As he explains,

> (…) for me, it is very powerful the fact that this carnival environment exists in a *popular* environment and it exists and is practised every Tuesday, for me, it's very valuable in a city like Santiago, I can't lose that (…). Something that was sustained within (…) classes with no resources, lower classes, to put it somehow—I hate that concept, but OK—it's alive! Me and the guys, some of us went to university, others only got to finish high school, we are interested in what has been maintained here. (Fernando Squicciarini, personal communication, 21st January 2017)

Paulina Martínez from the band *Calila Lila* further highlighted this quality of social rite, which had to be maintained as such: 'we are not doing the rueda on the stage, (…) we follow the singing order, but the rueda is a rite, and as a rite it has to be respected and remain in the spaces where it emerges' (personal communication, 19th January 2017). I interpret this ritual aspect of the canto a la rueda in terms of its relation to what can be called the 'original myth' of the culture of the roto chileno. Mircea Eliade (1987) proposed the existence of a double experience of time in the religious man—sacred and profane. Sacred time would be the time of the festivals, and also eternally reversible in so far as, through the festival, it cyclically returns to its primordial, mythical, origins (68-69). In this sense, to the extent where it continuously revisits the mythical time of the roto chileno, the practice of canto a la rueda can be understood as a sacred ritual that brings back this *popular* spirit of the roto.

Part of the attractiveness of canto a la rueda is its quality of being extremely dynamic challenges that require certain minimum expertise and fast-minded participants. Julio Alegría, a member of *Aparcoa* (the only cueca group from the nueva canción chilena movement), was invited to record with los Chileneros in 1973. Being a close friend of Nano Núñez, he participated in some canto a la rueda gatherings of those years. There, he was able to observe how cantores sang pieces of different poems, even improvising some verses: 'If you maintained a single melody, you could include a quatrain of your own or of another cueca you remembered and wanted to sing, and that was allowed' (Julio Alegría, personal communication, 24th January 2017). Jaco, a middle-aged cuequero who has performed in many groups—on this occasion he was playing for *Los Tricolores*—also described the way canto a la rueda used to be in the olden days, stressing the vertiginous nature of the practice, where cantores had to know their verses and melodies extremely well, as their own lives were at stake. He explained that these men were capable of mixing the *coa*—the slang of the street and jail—with poetry when improvising cuecas. Thus, he emphasised the toughness of the environment and the seriousness of the poetic challenge:

> To sing a la rueda you have to be defiant, or be sure of what you are going to do, of improvising, respecting syllables without falling long or short, but improvising. And I sang because I am sure, and if I am not sure, I will be stabbed, that is what happened in the old days… that is why the cueca is *brava* [or tough], the old men used to put knives under the table. (Jaco, personal communication, 9th April 2016)

This sort of risky nature is what gives the all-female band Calila Lila a special quality. Formed in 2010 they maintain that their particular stamp is having come from the rueda, 'from the street, from the playing field.' As Paulina explained,

> The rueda is not a space for mistakes. Although there might be mistakes because we are human beings, it is not a place for mistakes, you study at home, not there (…) you don't study the cuecas as melody and verse, you study the verse repertoire, and the melody repertoire (…) so there is the cleverness, there is your style… that is the fun part because if you are singing stuff that you already know, it's boring. (Paulina, personal communication, 19th January 2017)

The canto a la rueda is where all the members of this band (Calila Lila) met, and it informed their contemporary style as four women who have no need of male instrumentalists, and who sing the *chinganero* style, i.e. the canto a la rueda style. This is something they have consciously intended as they are aware that both cueca and canto a la rueda are traditions that have been mostly male-dominated throughout history. Kathy, another member of the group who started going to the canto a la rueda some years earlier than Paulina, explained how difficult it was for her, as a woman, to be initiated in this tradition:

> I came to the rueda [in 2009] and spent like one year going every Tuesday, and I found it very difficult to get in (…). It was hard for me to join in the singing, I had a hard time with that step, first because of machismo, they close the rueda, if they don't know you they don't consider you, you have to start generating acquaintances and connexions. (Kathy, personal communication, 19th January 2017)

Josy, another cantora, founder of the cueca-murga *Flor de Juana*, explained how to deal with this kind of sexism in canto a la rueda:

> If you go to the rueda, either you have to play the guitar, to enter, or if you are clever, you find yourself a position that is comfortable for a woman (…). Otherwise, the man will step over you, and those quarrels continue to exist in the rueda. I have a strong voice, so I make them listen, but not all women have that so they have to almost ask [men] for their permission to sing (…) or even go every day to the rueda to stand your ground, so yes, that thing is still there, the machismo. (Josy, personal communication, 12th January 2017)

According to most of my interviews, generally speaking, canto a la rueda holds a somewhat controversial status, which is not only due to sexism or the hostile environment it entails but also owing to its increasing internal disorder. Many complain about its current chaotic state, where people compete not only fiercely, but also wrongly, without even respecting some basic poetic rules. As some practitioners have told me:

> I find that it's getting too wild, and I'm not up for the shouting (…) It's like, they start with a chord, and they are already singing the cueca not minding if it sounds good or bad, the one who is singing will not stop. It's not very pleasant for one, sometimes you can't sing, or they don't listen because they're all shouting. (Claudia Mena, personal communication, 1st April 2016)

> What happens with many lads today, if you look at the rueda, the guys shout, but they don't sing them, they don't interpret them (…) because they don't respect the proper way to sing *a la rueda*. They don't respect tones, they don't respect the proper cueca structures. (Hernán Rojas, personal communication, 1st April 2016)

## Canto a la rueda as a tool of resistance

I believe this chaotic nature is also related to the festive character of the canto a la rueda. When referring to the cueca in general, many mentioned the word *fiesta*, which

literally means party or festivity, but also more generically refers to abundance, splurge, the suspension of time, all of which combine to lend the festival its celebratory mood, which once and again is reactivated through the ritual practices of cueca and canto a la rueda. Through the efforts of Luis Castro and Los Chinganeros, in particular, it has maintained this quality of original myth, which I believe is part of what makes it such a powerful and appealing tradition. It also entails a strong class identity which is related to *lo popular*, in the sense of belonging to *el pueblo*. Let us remember the statement made by Luis Castro González and his workshop team, as expressed in their study guide, where they maintain that the canto a la rueda has subsisted 'despite the persecutions and harassment from dominant classes, who wanted to erase our *popular*[160] customs and traditions' (Los Chinganeros, *Canto a la Rueda y Cosmovisión de la Chilena* study guide).

The *fiesta popular*[161] is the term that can best synthesise the meaning that canto a la rueda still holds among its practitioners. As we have seen, this *popular* identity at the same time deems it controversial, as the marginal settings it involves in some occasions entail hostile environments of competition, challenge, sexism, and unsafety. Far from being the reality of the current practitioners, most of whom I would say belong to a middle class, this *popular* identity has, however, been absorbed discursively and performatively. And this is why the canto a la rueda has often been targeted by the critiques of those who consider it to be a mere imitation of a practice that no longer exists the way it once did. Undoubtedly, today, it is not what it was in the early twentieth century. But a crucial part of its essence remains: a locus for *lo popular*, and beyond that, a locus for *popular* resistance.

We have seen in history that this *popular* cueca has mostly developed in the margins of society, as shown by abundant written documentation of its prohibition and of its venues being shut down at several moments throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (see González and Rolle [2005], Donoso [2009], Spencer [2007], Torres [2008], and Rojas [2009]), as well as of the fomentation of sanitised styles of cueca which better suit the tastes of the elites (see also Zubicueta [1908]). This is an old story; nevertheless, a current one. It is worth remembering what happened when in 2000, in the inauguration of Ricardo Lagos's presidential term they presented a show of urban-popular cueca featuring *Los Chileneros*. Some members of the parliament were quick to voice their

[160] My emphasis.
[161] See glossary.

complete disapproval, complaining against a cueca that 'did not represent Chilean music whatsoever' (María Angélica Cristi MP, in Torres 2008, 149).

One of the groups I had the chance to interview is *Los Compadritos*, the newest of them all, having started in 2016. When I talked to them they were still in the process of getting to know this form of cueca, which was for them completely new, despite all of them having learned about the cueca since primary school. What struck me is the ludic, liberating feeling they experienced through the practice of this cueca. Here is what some of them said:

> Los Chileneros, for example, have given me a way of communicating with my environment. For example, if one day I don't sing cueca at night, or I don't listen to cueca at night, I will be in a certain mood (…) but then if I listen to cueca (…) I start to see other things of mine, like a more ludic thing, a musical thing, and many other things that I don't… so I enjoy that communication with others. (Nicolás, personal communication, 21st August 2017)

> The cueca gives you something, like an 'eeeeeh,' like a start joking, I don't know how to say it, like a fooling around, a mischief, (…) in the beginning one plays very self-consciously and suddenly these things start coming out, [almost like] jokes, and it is like the music gives that to you. (Cucho, personal communication, 21st August 2017)

> I have learned to strengthen [my voice]. Like before I, many times it happened to me that I sang and I didn't hear myself much (…) because Tolo, JP and you [pointing at Cucho], sing loudly, among everyone you have to, you are like forced to take your voice out, I don't know if I practised it much (…) on my own, but rather in the rehearsals. (Jose, personal communication, 21st August 2017)

After all, most people in the field, and, certainly, many of my consultants, refer to this cueca as *cueca libertaria*, or libertarian cueca. I understand this feeling of liberation, enjoyment, playfulness and mischief as part of the carnivalesque nature of the canto a la rueda, which is also present in the performing style of the urban-popular cueca. This has much to do with the idea of music as a tool for 'subverting social class' (Montero-Díaz 2018). Through this practice, many young musicians are getting to know a style that appears to be new regarding Chilean folk practices. And as some have told me before, 'the cueca (…) is the only Chilean rhythm that is really festive' (Rodrigo Miranda, personal communication, 23rd January 2017). It is a space where people have historically been able to exert 'political [and social] disguise and anonymity' freely, and that is still the case today.

Even when there are not many visible constraints to the practice of cueca as a whole, we have seen how the canto a la rueda practice is continuously expelled from its venues, and the same has happened with many organisations that are representative of this style of cueca. And although it is at the centre of the revival—and there is undoubtedly a 'cueca fever' among Chilean youths—it has not yet acquired a more generalised or even institutional approval that may grant it a more fluid development. In

this sense, it continues to represent the space of the margins, and precisely because of that, it stands as the space of that which has not ever been grasped by the elites, a space that remains with *el pueblo*, and where *el pueblo* can find their tools to resist.

## CONCLUSIONS

With the urban-popular cueca boom, the whole spectrum of the cueca as a genre as well as some other folkloric traditions—urban and rural the same—have been included in this folk revival process in Chile, whose focal point is, of course, the cueca. The term revival might yet be ambiguous, as the cueca as a genre has never ceased existence, nor has it been in danger of really disappearing. Nonetheless, its urban-popular variant remained hidden among a population that was, and still is, positioned outside of the mainstream cultures and markets. Moreover, urban-popular expressions such as the canto a la rueda were abandoned entirely during the 1980s, as the spaces where they used to function were closed down. Since the 1990s, some people from academia, TV and mainstream music circles have brought the urban-popular cueca to the forefront, and this is how young cueca groups of men and women have powerfully proliferated across several cities in Chile, such as Santiago, Valparaíso, and Concepción. As seen in chapter 3, this process has cast doubt over the cueca's status as folklore, as the genre has moved closer to what we understand here as *popular* music.

On the other hand, the practice of canto a la rueda has remained in an obscure terrain. Even when most cueca practitioners are aware of and related to, the canto a la rueda, they make the distinction between its ritual and performing spaces. As a rite, it is only known by cuequeros and people associated with the cueca scene. As a style of performing the cueca, it has been showcased by most urban cuequeros and cuequeras throughout the past three decades. It is this style the one that has articulated a *popular* identity among those who practise the cueca.

Now, what has this *popular* identity implied for the practice of cueca in the past decades? I can at least mention two developments. The first one is related to an overemphasis of its status as an oral tradition. This is the result of some external mediations such as the publication of the book *Chilena o Cueca Tradicional. De Acuerdo con las Enseñanzas de Don Fernando González Marabolí* by Claro Valdés and others, discussed above. This publication meant an interaction and co-working between academia and *lo popular*. As Jordán (2011) acutely noted in her review of the book, many aspects of it evidence a distinction between the literate status of the (scholar) authors and

the oral status of the consultant (and co-author). Interestingly, this emphasis on oral tradition has been taken forward by the efforts of his nephew and the inheritor of this family tradition, Luis Castro González and his Escuela Maraboliana. An essential part of the cueca and canto a la rueda regeneration movement, they rely on the value of authenticity of their practices and are even building a case for it to be included in UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list. Striving for the institutionalisation of this variant of cueca, this group is a fervent defender of tradition in a purist sense.

The second development has to do with the rise of a space of resistance, especially in the case of post-authoritarian Chile since 1990. As already noted above, if urban-popular cueca was emerging as a valuable musical practice in Chile in the late 1960s, it was however suppressed by the 'cultural blackout' that reigned in the country during Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990). During those years the stylised cueca huasa was affirmed as a unique national symbol and declared the national dance by legal decree in 1979. Only in 1990 could the urban-popular cueca timidly re-emerge to the surface due to the efforts of several characters like the rock band Los Tres, and the musician and producer Mario Rojas, among others. The impact was such that in only ten years, young cuequero groups multiplied and already in the 2000s people were talking about a revival. These young groups are however not as interested in claims of authenticity and tradition, but rather in the liberating character of the *fiesta popular*. Canto a la rueda and urban-popular folk has granted Chilean youths a new alternative of expression and musical enjoyment, which has little to do with national identity. It is instead more related to the freedom of creating, interpreting and performing their own struggles and identities. This thus entails innovation and the re-signification of tradition, which remains at odds with the (purist) traditionalist efforts. We can thus observe the cohabitation of two conceptions of tradition within the revivalist aims, one related to an archaic, stagnant, past (Bakan 2012, 29), and the other one associated with the 'social values of [the music's] producers and consumers' (Spiller 2008, 4), making tradition more current and dynamic. While one can be tempted to attribute each particular revivalist tendency—the purist and the innovative—to specific actors, the truth is that both coexist (perhaps to different extents) in every effort to revive the ritual and festive experience of the cueca and the canto a la rueda.

The revival process has developed at a relatively slow pace, and we still have to see how it continues to unfold through these two different traditionalist trends. What we know, however, is that it continues to serve the political concerns of a young generation

who seeks for a space to develop identities that escape the social and political dichotomies that have ruled over the Chilean cultural landscapes in the past several decades. And as long as it continues to serve such interests, revival will continue to flourish in ways that we have yet to see.

# CHAPTER 6: CONTEMPORARY URBAN CANTORAS

## INTRODUCTION

The word *cantora* refers to a female singer and is usually applied in the context of traditional music in Chile and many parts of Latin America. The cantora is a woman, predominantly peasant, who has cultivated local musical traditions throughout generations, passing her craft and knowledge—which comprises extensive repertoires and specific modes of instrument playing as well as ways of singing—on to her descendants. Moreover, she has been able to transmit the social role she has fulfilled at the core of her local community's socialising and entertaining spaces. Such a community has grown wider and more complex along with the urbanising processes that have affected most of the folkloric traditions of the Chilean territory. Today cantoras continue to carry this legacy in both rural and urban environments. In this chapter, I specifically focus on the musical scene of urban-popular cueca, mainly in the cities of Santiago and Valparaiso.

As we know, the cueca is a couple dance with its origins in the processes of ethnic mixture during the colonial period in Chile and the Southern Cone, and it developed variously in several other countries in Latin America—such as Bolivia, Perú, Argentina, Ecuador, México, etc. Its poetic and musical forms have been consistently respected throughout the years, having remained unchanged through oral tradition. Nonetheless, a few stylistic diversifications can be identified which have resulted in several different styles of cueca across Chile today.[162] Such differences reside mainly in geographical factors; firstly, regarding the rural-urban dyad, and secondly, the specific locations—be it the Andean north or the Patagonic south and all the variety in between. Differences are shown most often in practitioners' outfits, the venues and social situations where the cueca is played and danced, as well as in the music, where the changes are found in the use of major or minor scales, different paces and rhythms, instrumentation, and singing styles.

These local differences also imply another critical distinction, which is the composition of the cueca band. Deep in the countryside, it is common to find cantoras, who most commonly sing and play the guitar by themselves or in duos. They sing cuecas and *tonadas*[163] among other peasant *popular* music forms, in the context of the diverse

[162] See chapter 4 for a detailed stylistic history of the genre.
[163] See glossary.

social encounters of rural life: birthdays, baptisms, funerals, seasonal Catholic feasts, etc. In small rural towns, one can also find the so-called *Folkloric Projection Groups*, which are mixed-gender groups who build artistic projections of traditional repertoires, generally aiming for more mediated performances on bigger stages and with larger audiences. In big cities, you find *lotes* or bunches of *cuequeros* who play the cueca among many other types of Latin American *popular* music proper to bohemian urban environments, such as tango, bolero, Peruvian waltz, etc. These lotes cuequeros have historically comprised male singers. This is the context where, over the recent decades, and especially after the return to democracy in 1990, after Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990), female singers have started to gradually open spaces for themselves to perform and be legitimised as cueca practitioners.

My purpose in this chapter is to look at this process of women's entrance into the male-dominated world of urban cueca, taking into account (1) their female experiences within the urban cueca scene and in the broader field of Chilean *popular* music, (2) the social and aesthetic discourses by which they have consolidated their positions in such fields, and (3) the definitions they have come to construct about themselves and the figure of the cantora, also in the context of the recent women-led social movements in Chile and Latin America. I first contextualise the contemporary urban cantora within global theoretical discussions on gender and feminism. Then I narrow the context down to that of Latin American and ultimately Chilean gender relations and hierarchies, especially in the context of the current feminist waves that have arisen across Latin American countries during the past couple of years. The analysis of these two contexts will shed light on the ambivalence of the cantoras' gender experiences and perspectives, as they have to balance the cultural values they have inherited from both local conservative religious traditions and contemporary global discourses. Ultimately, this chapter examines how the embodiment of the cantora archetype in the contemporary urban folkloric scene in Chile is a performative exercise of identity construction framed within a process of cultural resistance, contributing to the challenging of specific long-standing gender barriers that have been largely evidenced in the world of cueca.

I analyse some cueca groups from Santiago and Valparaíso, as well as some soloist cantoras, whom I have had the opportunity to interview throughout my fieldwork trips in 2016, 2017 and 2018. The style of cueca that is taken into consideration here is most

generally urban-popular cueca, alongside the practice of *canto a la rueda*.[164] However, as the universe of the cantora encompasses a broader musical world than just the one of the cueca, I also include female soloist singers who practise Chilean folk roots music—including the cueca—and who are part of the current urban folk revival movement in Santiago and Valparaíso.

## GLOBAL DISCUSSIONS ON GENDER CONSTRUCTION

### Brief historical context

Women's fight for equal rights constitutes a long and complicated history which is worth briefly reviewing in order to provide some background when examining the Chilean cantora's own struggles. First one must take into account that such a history has been built through dissimilar battles, theories and chronologies in the different regions of the world, and I specifically focus on what has happened in Chile, and its broader context of Latin America. That said, it is also worth noting that as a former colony, there is a long account of Chile being influenced by external cultures—first it was Spain (Europe), and then the United States. Like many other countries in the world, Chile has been widely exposed to Western philosophic schemes and cultural trends. In this sense, Chilean feminist tendencies are infused with theories developed in Europe and the United States, at the same time that they take influence from their more proximate academic and social contexts. This is why I will attempt to provide context for said sources of influence here, narrowing it down from global to local contexts.

The Chilean history of feminism might be on the one hand understood as part of the broader Western history of feminism in the sense that it has developed in line with the defence of the same 'universal' rights for women, and to some extent, it still relates to more global feminism. Thus, the suffragette's movement that started in Europe in the last decades of the nineteenth century had its correlate in Latin America since the 1920s, being Uruguay the first country where women's unrestricted right to vote was obtained in 1927;[165] in Chile, the free female vote was first obtained in 1949.[166]

In its origins in Britain and the United States, the suffragette movement involved demands for a change in women's 'traditional role in society' which was associated with

[164] See glossary for definition.
[165] It is interesting to note that Uruguayan female vote was obtained before the Spanish one, where it was definitely obtained in 1931.
[166] Municipal vote was first obtained in 1934, but presidential unrestricted vote was only attained in 1949.

being ‘educated wives and mothers rather than independent women;’ such a model would reinforce ‘new forms of exploitation’ in terms of the conditions of female employment, whose ‘largest occupation (…) remained domestic service’ (Bryson 2003, 70).

This campaign was constituted by women from diverse backgrounds and consequently various strands of thought, and therefore its articulation involved a series of complexities which became even more evident after the vote battles were won. The first country to ever give women the vote was New Zealand in 1894, and by the end of the 1920s, most Western countries had done so as well. The interwar period was therefore characterised by ‘(…) in-fighting, loss of direction, and, in some cases, uncritical adaptation to an essentially anti-feminist ideological environment through which institutional barriers to women’s progress were replaced by psychological ones’ (84). Such internal differences were complex in nature. Whilst philosophically, there was a crucial distinction between the conception of women as having a purer, morally superior character, and the notion of women as equal to men (74), there was also a social distinction by which a group of white middle-class women would be harshly fought against due to their ignorance of other social groups’ realities and needs (75-77). Such a fight would be shaped as a socialist emphasis on welfare versus a fight for equal rights that was increasingly becoming ‘an issue of social privilege’ (77). Generally speaking, this was a time when feminism shifted ‘towards more collectivist and interventionist solutions’ (92) and ‘a time when socialist and Marxist feminist ideas were being developed and, some believed, put into practice’ (93).

The situation in Chile in the 30s and 40s was similarly unsettled as women were gaining more space in universities, paid work and the public sphere in general, having had their first signs of success in the vote campaign as well. As Rafael Sagredo (2014) explains:

> The difficulties the country underwent during the 1930s were a decisive impulse to the female movement. The economic depression and its consequences provoked women to go on their first massive demonstration in July 1931, to reject the abuses of which their husbands, sons and brothers were object. In 1934 they attained the right to vote on municipal elections, and started the fight for their own political rights.

Rubí Carreño (2007) analyses developments of gender construction in Chile through the literary work of a number of authors throughout the twentieth century, explaining that while the hegemonic discourse was readily available in the press and public policies, literary production can show the course of counter-hegemonic struggles over the century. She explains that these decades harboured a tension between the ideas

of equality and complementarity, whereby 'to each sex, differentiated powers, spaces and attributes would correspond, which, when bound together would allow complementation… [but would, however,] implicitly or explicitly suppose a higher valuation of the masculine and the female inferiority' (52).

In 1949 Simone De Beauvoir wrote her *Second Sex*, an exceptionally influential feminist text until today. With her core statement that 'one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman' (273) she analyses the process by which women's constraints do not rely on nature, but on the very process of social construction of the feminine and the masculine, wherein women are deemed to be 'the Other,' that which is not 'the Absolute' man (16). This view posed a challenge over the 'artificial nature of womanhood' (Bryson 2003, 131), subsequently offering new possibilities for women through the rejection of this conception. Beauvoir's account was both highly 'shocking and inspiring' (Ibid), facing harsh critiques by her fellow feminist theorists at the time of publication; it has been however an unquestionably 'central starting-point for questions which feminists are still debating today' (138). Moreover, her 'refusal to recognise any essential female identity or "name the category of woman" [is what] some postmodern feminists see as truly radical' (134).

Judith Butler (1999) takes this point further, first when comparing Beauvoir's account to that of Luce Irigaray's, who, instead of reflecting in a masculine and still binary logic over the dichotomy between Absolute man and the Other, talks about 'the sex which is not one' but is rather 'multiple.' According to Butler, Irigaray's logic 'provides a point of departure for a criticism of hegemonic Western representation' whereby the person is constructed and understood as a universal category upon which attributes such as gender are applied (14). Furthermore, she expresses the need for a conceptualisation of gender that can satisfactorily escape such hegemonic representations, as 'To claim that gender is constructed is not to assert its illusoriness or artificiality' (43). In her cited book, *Gender Trouble*, she offers a logical deconstruction of the concepts of gender, sex, and desire, by which she is able to destabilise the naturalness with which they are accepted and applied in our societies, stating that 'There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results' (33). One key outcome of this is that women shall not be seen as victims of a system of oppression, as oppression itself 'requires individual participation on a large scale in order to maintain its malignant life' (Butler in Bryson 2007, 134). The rejection of the notion of victimhood against the 'universal oppressor-man' (165)—which was

specially deployed during the 1960s by the Radical feminist movement and the resignification of the notion of *patriarchy*—has been an important issue discussed within the postfeminist strands of thought. Here, values such as fragmentation and the recognition of the 'interlocking and interdependent nature of oppressions' (Bryson 2007, 230) are brought about to include the global diversity of marginalisation experiences, and a task that has been undertaken by *black feminism*, enabling women 'to support each other without insisting that their situation is identical' (230). In a similar vein, *postmodernist feminism* arises against the essentialist tendencies that group all women together in one homogenous heterosexual group against the universal man. Fragmented as they are, one can say that they understand labels such as gender and sex as products of a society which should be questioned and recontextualised for a new self-determining human being to emerge. Balancing it all, as Butler (2004) would later add,

> What I call my 'own' gender appears perhaps at times as something that I author or, indeed, own. But the terms that make up one's own gender are, from the start, outside oneself, beyond oneself in a sociality that has no single author (and that radically contests the notion of authorship itself). (1)

## Gender and Latin American music

The situation in Latin America has been a bit different. Colonisation has brought about violent irruptions of language and religion which have been crucial to the cultural identity formations in Latin America, today displayed in the multiple syncretic forms that have mixed Spanish language and Christianity with multiple local pre-Hispanic languages and/or dialects and cults.

It is worth noting that the figure of the cantora originates in the context of Latin American rural culture, historically characterised by a tacit male-chauvinism in both treatment and gender-role-labelling of women, partly a legacy of the cruelties of the Spanish colonisation. We could extrapolate what Octavio Paz (1981) asserts about the 'Chingada'[167] in México, to how femininity has been handled throughout all Latin American cultures since the Conquest period:

> Who is the Chingada? First, it is the Mother. Not a Mother of flesh and blood but a mythical figure. Chingada is one of many Mexican representations of motherhood as La Llorona[168] or «the suffering Mexican mother» celebrated on May 10th. Chingada is the mother who has suffered, metaphorically or actually, the infamous corrosive action implied in the verb[169] by which it is named. (79)

[167] *La Chingada* is a Mexican idiom that literally means 'the raped woman.'
[168] *La Llorona* is the weeping woman who wanders around looking for her lost children.
[169] The verb *chingar* means 'to rape.'

He continues:

> The chingón is the macho, the one who opens. The chingada is the female, pure passivity, helpless towards the exterior. The relationship between both is violent, determined by the cynical power of the former and the powerlessness of the latter. (81)

In general, women in Latin America have been assigned a position of inferiority and weakness, relegated to the domestic sphere while public space has been dominated by men (with some notable exceptions). We will see, however, how the specificity of domination in Latin America rests upon the relationship between sexuality and violence, which is cross-culturally intrinsic to Latin American cultures that were 'chingadas' or raped by the Spanish white male. In other words, rape is inherent to male domination in Latin America in so far as it is a legacy of the process of colonisation.

Sonia Montecino (1997) refers to the figure of *the mother* as the universal model of female gender in Latin America. She understands identity as experience, and as such, it is not static but instead shifting; thus, gender identity would 'suppose a constant crossing of variables' (47) which might involve ethnicity, age, class, etc. Now, Latin American identities have in common the experience of *mestizaje*, which has imprinted Latin American cultures with what she calls the 'original scene' (48) whereby the native woman is *illegitimately* united with the Spanish man bringing about fatherless offspring whose central adult figure, and most importantly, referent of origins, was the mother. Thus, she establishes: 'As a corollary of the "original scene" we state that the feminine is indisputably constructed by the mestizo culture from the model of The Mother, and the masculine from the model of the son or the absent father' (Ibid), always emphasising the illegitimate nature of Latin American lineages.

Following from this argument, Rubí Carreño (2007) adds that models of masculinity and femininity would be dually constructed along the borders of a racial legitimacy, where the space of the white and powerful belonged to the 'chingón' and the Virgin, whilst the illegitimate mestizo sphere would belong to the 'huacho'—Chilean pejorative term for illegitimate son—and to the 'china-sexo' (183)—as she calls the archetype that emerges from the mestizo peasant woman, which in Chile is popularly called *china.*[170] Carreño examines a corpus of Chilean literary narrative of the twentieth century to identify certain unspoken gender conceptions and interactions. She argues that beyond the typical gender characterisation where the male dominates the female, gender

[170] The term *china* has been most commonly used in Chile to refer to the female correlate of both the (urban) *roto* and the (rural) *huaso*. A more detailed definition can be read below in this chapter, and in the glossary.

construction in Latin America would obey a logic whereby sexuality was understood as a 'practice of power and violence' (47) which operates both in private and public realms, i.e., as the colonisation of land and women. This logic materialises in Chile in the context of the *Hacienda,*[171] the patron's property, 'which is as well the space of the nation' (49). In the space of sexuality, both power and victimhood can be in the hands of both men and women, where Virgins—mothers whose power relies on having been desexualised—chingones, chingadas and huachos compete and 'interchange their masks' (Ibid).

Carreño applies the same logic on the space of urban cueca, which she characterises as an 'erotic dance,' understood as 'a political and aesthetic practice that emerges from the *popular*[172] classes to render visible a breath of life in moments of citizen crisis and dissidence' (153-154). In both works, she establishes an analogy between the structures of the colony, hacienda, and dictatorship—referring specifically to that ruled by Augusto Pinochet between 1973 and 1990—where power is enforced through (sexual) 'liberation and repression' (155). Underground cultures of, then *chinganas*[173] and brothels, now the erotic *fiesta* of urban cueca, constitute a space for the exercise of what Foucault would call 'biopoetics,' understood as the artistic resistance to 'factual powers that consider [the subordinated] as labour, residue, or, from the domain of representation, "the other"' (158). Sexuality would then be the space of interaction between domination and resistance: I argue that erotic, carnivalesque cueca appears as a site for contemporary female groups to exercise such resistance towards the historically institutionalised power of men in the field of cueca.

Political mechanisms of domination and resistance through the space of sexuality have been historically at play to serve the cause of an empire first and a nation after. Peter Wade (2000) underlines Doris Sommer's account on the relation between gender and nation in Latin America, which is interestingly shown on 'the romantic novels that became required reading (…) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, reveal[ing] a marriage between Eros and Polis in a project of national consolidation' (17). Wade argues that the same can be shown to happen in the realm of music, giving the examples of bolero in Mexico, tango in Argentina, and I would add, cueca in Chile, where certain hierarchies would be established among their diverse racialised musical

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[171] The Spanish word *hacienda* refers to an administrative territorial unit, usually of large proportions, owned by Spaniards or their creole inheritors during the colonial period across Latin America.
[172] My emphasis.
[173] See glossary.

expressions. Thus, black or indigenous artistic manifestations of 'profane sexuality' would be contrasted against a white exaltation of 'moral decency,' resulting in 'the imputation by "whites" of a lascivious, powerful, unrestrained sexuality to "blacks" [or natives], a notion deeply embedded in the history of Christianity and Western colonial domination' (17-18).[174] He continues to explain how such musical and dance forms have been connected with the body and sexuality producing racial codes that are nothing but 'cultural constructions' (23) that occur 'not just *on*, but *through*,[175] the body' (Ibid).[176]

Regarding such racially and socially invested moral constructions of gender, body and music, *reggaetón* seems to be one of the most relevant contemporary Latin American genres that operate as a field of battle between different positions. It is thus worth briefly reviewing how dynamics of domination and resistance have taken place in this genre before moving on to the scene of urban-popular cueca.

Having its roots in Jamaican dance music and in 'black US genres,' it was given its name in the 1990s by Puerto-Rican producers (Moore 2012, 211-212), and by the beginning of the twenty-first century it had travelled all the way through South America to arrive with great popularity to Chile, where it has remained highly popular until today. According to Ximena De Toro (2011), while reggaetón has had a cross-social success in Chile, 'it is the impoverished youth who has made of reggaetón a lifestyle' (82). She explains that youths in Chile have grown up under two powerful and opposing influences: a globalised neo-liberal tendency to consumption and pleasure, and the localised traditionalism that is grounded on the long-lasting remnants of Christianity. She expresses her concern about the meanings of manhood and womanhood that are being constructed in younger generations through the experience of reggaetón, affirming that following 'the logic of the patriarchal system' reggaetón has meant the 'validation of the roles that have been assigned to man and woman' (89). Their binary opposition is expressed over and over in reggaetón lyrics that stress dichotomies such as 'active/passive,' 'subject/object,' 'powerful/weak,' 'public space/private space,' etc.

On the other hand, rather than posing reggaetón and its sexual language as a threat whereby women would be victims of objectification, Jan Fairley (2006) asks whether

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[174] A thorough history on the European/creole elite rejection and prohibition of Chilean cueca can be read in chapters 3 and 5.
[175] Author's emphasis.
[176] Let us not forget the political censorship posed over urban-popular cueca in Ricardo Lagos's presidential inauguration ceremony in 2000, as mentioned in chapters 3 and 5.

reggaetón could actually be a means of empowerment for women. She considers recent discussions on dance and gender and states that the conceptions and emotions around the latter would be expressed in the former, adding that 'dance rules offer a typical example of the synthesis of ideas on the feminine, the masculine, and the "proper" interaction between genders' (479). This relates to the understanding that gender can be *performed*—in this case through dance and the body—as discussed by Judith Butler, and that oppression to some extent needs the agreement of the oppressed; in this sense, women in reggaetón should not be understood as mere victims of patriarchy.

This seems to coincide with the Chilean journalist and feminist-activist Andrea Ocampo's account of reggaetón, which she has been studying in Chile since 2007 when she published her book *Ciertos ruidos: nuevas tribus urbanas chilenas*. In an interview with *La Cuarta* Chilean newspaper, she relates reggaetón to feminism, and contextualises her work in an attempt to help women to be able to 'enjoy this music without having to be judged for wanting to have fun, for wanting to move our body parts,' and also an attempt to 'liberate *perreo*, as well as those who *perrean,* from prejudice.' She adds,

> What is the type of women who move their buttocks, boobs or hips? Is she an easy woman? Is she a slut? Is she the woman who wants to sleep with everyone? Is she a bad woman? I ask myself these sorts of questions departing from a concept of self-determination of woman as a subject of pleasure and not an object of pleasure (La Cuarta 2017)

This would also relate to what Carreño argued as the practice of biopoetics in cueca as an operation of creative resistance against the hegemonic power that encapsulates 'the other' in a subordinated position and representation.

As has been widely argued, sexuality can be seen both as a source of domination and a field of resistance. As Jan Fairley would ask about reggaetón, 'Is it empowering to one generation and not to another?' (2006, 486). Undoubtedly, understandings of gender, sex and the body are to a certain extent determined by the social-historical context—which implies age, race, culture, religion, political and economic orders, etc.—in which they have emerged, and thus it is relatively easy to explain such opposing views. In the case of the cantora, we are talking about a trans-generational lineage that is said to have its origins more than two centuries ago. Thus, tradition is a prevalent force driving the practice of most cantoras. However, there are also cantoras who belong to younger generations that do not take positions within those traditionalist crusades, nor do they understand womanhood in the same way. I will now analyse the historical development of the cantora in the field of cueca to be able to understand how ideas of gender, sex and the body have been shaped within the genre, as well as to identify the mechanisms by

which the cantoras are now resisting/overcoming the limitations posed by such conceptions.

## URBAN-POPULAR CUECA: A FIELD OF DOMINATION AND RESISTANCE

As with many other Latin American dances, the Chilean cueca has developed through ambivalent paths between social recognition and prohibition. Written records of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are centred on the discussion of its origins and its ethnic influences, in the broader context of the construction of the nation and its symbols. One can easily find in those writings the appearance of two types of cueca: one that was a recognised and celebrated ballroom dance, and the other one despised and often prohibited, which was associated with the *bailes de tierra* or *bailes de chicoteo*, a group of *popular* picaresque dances, which includes the (zama)cueca that took place in the chingana, a place for *popular* amusement.[177] As Karen Donoso (2009) affirms, 'what invades Santiago towards 1830 is the "chinganero environment," as a form of entertainment' (100). This environment was constituted by the exuberance of *popular* sociability and behaviours, whose rejection by elites is largely documented. Already from the 1820s, we can find evidence of such contemptuous views:

> An English traveller pointed out in 1822 that these dances '(...) consist of the most graceless and most tiring movements for the body and extremities, accompanied by lascivious and indelicate movements, which progressively increase in energy and passion, leaving the couples fatigued and exhausted when retiring to their places.' In another story, from 1823, it was explained that 'it is dance that Chileans prefer above all and it is with a kind of fury that they surrender themselves to the dance encounters, in which they deploy an enormous grace, which despite being of little artistry, it does not fail to be attractive.' In 1825, another visitor narrates 'Near the Cañada, in the San Isidro neighbourhood, there is the Parral and although the dances are not very decent, you have to go to the chinganas to judge the degree of license tolerated in Chile and see the *chocolate*, the *torito* and other dances.' (101)

Such moralist, condescending comments are a clear reflection of the culturally constructed social/racial codes that are assigned to the bodies of the peoples by dominant white observers, as has been argued above. This is scarcely a new phenomenon, and the same logic has been applied over multiple musical genres throughout history, where non-white practitioners are associated with particular moral and sexual behaviours.[178] The result is the prevalence of white-dominated critical discourses over the cultural and aesthetic values of the people's customs, one such being the cueca. As discussed in previous chapters, however, such customs harbour an enormous potential for resistance

[177] See glossary.

[178] A very interesting discussion on this matter can be found on chapter 6 of Simon Frith's book *Performing Rites* (123-144).

in so far as they operate through codes that appear to be inapprehensible by elites who do not take part on the cultural environment of *el pueblo*.[179]

Now, the social discursive domination we have been discussing has yet another dimension, which is related to gender dominance. As has been noted, male-chauvinism has been an extensive historical tendency throughout Latin America and is very much reflected in cultural practices. The case of the cueca is no exception. Felipe Solís (2013) conducted a study of the significant presence of patriarchal values in the words of Chilean cuecas, based mainly on the cueca discographic archive *Cancionero de Cuecas* (a project he directs) and a cueca songbook that contains a compilation of more than a thousand cueca lyrics (see Figueroa 2004). Sadly, although not surprisingly, lyrics featuring open violence against women or pejorative female role assignment are found in innumerable traditional cuecas that remain widely popular to this day. An example of violence as openly expressed by a male figure is found in this fragment of the popular *Chicha de Curacaví*:

*Table 6.1. Chicha de Curacaví*

| **Spanish Lyrics (Original)** | **English Translation** |
|---|---|
| Todos pa' fuera, sí<br>chicha en botella<br>a la mujer celosa<br>palos con ella | Everyone out, oh yes,<br>bottled chicha[180]<br>to the jealous woman<br>beat her with a stick |

A different account of gender violence, this time ironically narrated by a woman, is found on a cueca collected and sung by Violeta Parra in her LP *La Cueca Cantada por Violeta Parra* (1959):

[179] See glossary.
[180] The word *chicha* refers to a typical Chilean grape liquor.

*Table 6.2. Para qué me casaría*

| Spanish Lyrics (Original) | English Translation |
|---|---|
| Para qué me casaría,<br>tan bien que estaba soltera.<br>Si mi taita me pegaba,<br>mi marido dice juera.<br><br>Mi marido me estima<br>como una reina.<br>No me deja costillas<br>que no me quiebra.<br><br>Que no me quiebra, ay sí,<br>tan imprudente<br>que me tira del pelo<br>Delante 'e gente<br><br>Cierto tan imprudente<br>delante 'e gente | Why did I get married?<br>I was doing so well single.<br>My father used to hit me,<br>my husband tells me off.<br><br>My husband appreciates me<br>just like a queen.<br>There is no rib in me<br>that he doesn't break.<br><br>That he doesn't break, oh yes,<br>so imprudent,<br>that he pulls my hair<br>in front of people.<br><br>Right, so imprudent,<br>in front of people. |

Regarding gender roles, a controversial, yet still very popular cueca appears to be one written by the famous chinganero-style singer and composer Mario Catalán, which was first recorded in 1951:

*Table 6.3. Arremángate el vestido (Mario Catalán)*

| Spanish Lyrics (Original) | English Translation |
|---|---|
| Arremángate el vestido<br>para que muestres la pierna<br>que bailando esta cuequita<br>hay un hombre que te pretenda.<br><br>Date la vuelta niña<br>dátela fuerte<br>a ver si así bailando<br>cambias de suerte.<br><br>Cambias de suerte, sí<br>más arribita.<br>Se están enamorando<br>por lo blanquita.<br><br>Ya encontraste marido,<br>baja el vestido. | Roll your dress up<br>so you can show your leg<br>as dancing this *cuequita*<br>there might be a man who wants you.<br><br>Turn around girl,<br>turn around hard<br>to see if dancing like this<br>you change your luck.<br><br>You change your luck, yes,<br>roll it up higher.<br>They are falling in love,<br>of your cute whiteness.<br><br>Now you have found a husband,<br>roll your dress down. |

This sort of framework of gender values is present in the world of cueca across social classes, and it is quite easy to find lyrics in this tone across the sociocultural spectrum of cueca practitioners throughout the twentieth century, and even in female interpreters. And although the world of urban-popular cueca has recently proved to be a

space for cultural resistance through its exaltation of the *fiesta popular*[181]—which is one of the reasons I believe it is being revived so strongly among Chilean youths—it is still an environment where male-dominated values and discourses prevail. This has to do with the (re)construction of social archetypes that have led the historical narratives behind the cueca revival. Among such archetypes we find the *roto*, the *huaso* and the *china*.

The *roto chileno* is a figure that represents the Chilean *popular* subject, as the product of mestizaje relations between Spanish men and native women. As a social archetype, the roto was brave, loyal to his own, yet astute and slippery. Typically a male figure, he is supposed to have fought against Perú and Bolivia in the Pacific War (1879-1883), ending up victorious, and was as well sent to fight in the Chilean civil war (1891) by the contending elites to fight their many quarrels causing significant social disturbances. This roto attended the chinganas and *casas de canto*,[182] which were taverns or brothels hosted by women, with live musicians singing and playing urban-popular musics until dawn. He had a sense of nationality of his own, and his cuecas celebrated the Pacific War's victory, they condemned president Balmaceda's betrayal in the civil war and had quite a particular way of referring to women. This is a figure that however developed in the margins of society and therefore in the margins of written history; therefore, most of what we know about the roto is from oral tradition, including old cueca lyrics that have been retrieved through research. According to the elites, it was a flawed, dreadful figure, opposed to the symbols of the national identity they were creating, and even in our days, one can still hear middle-aged high-class people using the term 'roto' as an insult to people they consider to be of a lower social status. However, in the world of urban-popular cueca, the roto is the king. His tough, defiant, and sometimes aggressive manners configured the model by which many young cuequeros have shaped their behaviours, their musical and aesthetic styles. And such manners in many cases have included a tacit pejorative treatment towards women.

The *huaso* is the peasant correlate of the urban roto. Its archetypical representations emerged as a celebration of the tender and picturesque precariousness of the Chilean peasant character, and this figure has been celebrated by social and political elites at several moments in history, as a model of national identity. This is evidenced for example in the fact that most sound records of cueca, since 1906 until 1967, only show

[181] See glossary.
[182] See glossary.

this type of cueca—now often called the *cueca huasa*—which had been often used as a symbol of national identity.

I believe the *china* is today a controversial figure. The term is thought to come from the *quechua* language, with several meanings, such as '1) Girl, young woman, lower-class woman, commoner (usually derogatory); 2) Maid, servant (pejorative); 3) Indian woman; 4) Beloved, submissive, public woman' (Garrido 1976, 68); all of which represent a woman that is either socially or sexually in a subordinate position. The term has been most commonly used in Chile to refer to the female correlate of both the (urban) roto and the (rural) huaso. It is thought to have been used initially when referring to indigenous women who served the Spanish soldiers, and that is the inaugural image from which current meanings and associations have been derived, being applied today especially to women of marginal (*popular*) origins. In the countryside, such women have been the huaso's companions; moreover, there is an abundant historical reference of the abuse of the patron towards women who worked within the confines of his land. In the city, on the other hand, the term refers to women who belong to *popular* neighbourhoods, often being associated with prostitution and urban nightlife more generally. Along with the *cholas*—women from quechua indigenous heritage—and the *zambas*—afro descendent women—they would be the roto's companions.

As stated above, urban-popular cueca enjoyed relative popularity, which gradually increased from the 1950s to the 1970s. The first discographic production entirely dedicated to this style was the series *El Folklore Urbano*, where seven LPs were recorded between 1967 and 1973. But such brief popularity only lasted until the military coup in 1973, where most expressions of *popular* culture and the bohemian night of Santiago were shut down until the return of democracy in 1990. Since then, a gradual process of revival has been under development, which today might be at its peak. The revival has been centred precisely on this urban-popular variant of the cueca, and today there are hundreds of young cueca groups that are bringing back the cueca fever in diverse and innovative ways. While the figure of the roto has been largely celebrated, both the figure of the huaso and the musical style it represents have been generally held in contempt due to their associations with the nationalistic imaginaries of dictatorship.[183] The figure of the china has held contradictory degrees of acceptance. On the one hand, it has been mostly (though superficially) recognised as a symbol of the 'huasa woman' with her

[183] See glossary.

corresponding costumes and symbols—under the models that were disseminated in primary schools since the cueca was declared the national dance in 1979, during the dictatorship. And on the other hand, its underlying subordinate character has increasingly reached most young people's awareness, who would thus prefer not to identify women with such a controversial connotation. There is yet another female archetype which today seems to suit female cueca practitioners' identities in a much better way: the cantora.

## The figure of the cantora

Among the huaso, the roto and the china, the cantora emerges as a rather dignifying archetype. The cantora was present in *popular* festivities in Chile since the colonial period. Being a cantora represented much of what being a woman was in those times—and of course, holding most of the gender-based burdens women had to endure as well. Besides raising her children, taking care of her household, providing herbal medical care and many other contributions to her local community, she was the social entertainer, presenting her music in seasonal celebrations, games, competitions, ritual ceremonies and every social event. So both the huaso and the roto got their traditional music repertoires from their mothers, aunts, grandmothers, and/or sisters who were cantoras.

Miloska Valero is a contemporary folk music interpreter. At a given moment in her life, she discovered that her great-grandmother had been a peasant cantora, and her daughter, Miloska's grandmother, had been able to transmit her testimony about the craft of the cantora during the past years. According to Miloska, being a cantora

> (…) was quite a restricted craft really, because the woman in those times was married and generally her husband had to grant her the authorisation to go to perform… it was different… The cantora as such wasn't the one who went on stage, the cantora was the woman who, as I've been telling you, put the broom down, finished doing the dishes and started singing in family celebrations, and in rituals such as *velorios de angelitos* [or young children's funerals] and things like that… that figure was quite hidden before. (Miloska Valero, personal communication, 25th September 2017)

Isabel (Chabelita) Fuentes, an emblematic Chilean cantora, founder of the folk group *Las Morenitas* (1954-) also described what the job of the cantora entailed during the 1950s and 1960s:

> Chabelita: [we worked at] rodeos every week, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays. In Chimbarongo, Melipilla, San Vicente, Rancagua. I lived in Santiago. I came here [to San Vicente] when I got married [in 1975], it was a good thing because I couldn't live in Santiago today … In *boîtes*[184] we did many, in every boîte in Santiago: *El Pollo Dorado*, *El Gollesca*, *El Tarrún*, *El Club de la Medianoche*, every day…

[184] See glossary for definition.

> Me: Did you stop working when you got married?
>
> Chabelita: Yes, for eight years, thinking I was going to have children. But I didn't, that's better. Thank you, God, because we have to thank him for everything (…) I was a grown woman already (…) I have [symbolic] children and grandchildren everywhere. God knows why he does things.
>
> (Chabelita Fuentes, personal communication, 23rd August 2017)

The assignment of a gendered role to the cantora is related to a more general gender role assignment in the poetic-musical manifestations of Chilean rural folklore. With the arrival of the Spanish colonisers, the first significant linguistic influence had to do with the evangelising role of Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries who used the poetic form of the *décima*[185] to teach the gospel and the Spanish language. These practices crystallised in what we know today as *canto a lo poeta* or *paya*,[186] a form of improvisational *popular* poetry which integrally maintained the décima structure, and is thus considered a fundamental expression for the fluidity of the transmission of folkloric traditions in Chile. Similarly, other poetic forms such as *romances* and *coplas* continued to derive from the octosyllabic metric, and by the end of the colonial period the cueca, the tonada and other types of poetry, music and dance could be clearly distinguished.

Rodolfo Lenz (1863-1938) was a German philologist who devoted his research to nineteenth-century poetic-musical traditions in Chile. He maintained that there existed clear boundaries between the poetic-musical activity of men and women in the Chilean countryside, where women were more associated to the more passive role of the interpreter, and men to the active role of improvisator and creator. According to Lenz, the male branch of Chilean folk traditions ascribes to the practice of the canto a lo poeta, which has historically had considerable religious influence and taken on a more serious tone. When it is directly concerned with worship it is called *canto a lo Divino*,[187] and it is practised in funerals, baptisms, and all kinds of (Catholic) religious celebrations; and when it focuses on social and political issues, among many other topics of human life, it is called *canto a lo humano*,[188] which can be practised at any social occasion.

On the other hand, according to Lenz, the female branch has always been more associated with the cueca and tonada. One of the first characteristics that emerge when investigating the figure of the cantora is her role as the hostess of the feast. This figure emerges in a rural context where for a long time there was no access to sound and

[185] See glossary.
[186] See glossary.
[187] See glossary.
[188] See glossary.

communication technologies, so she was the one who animated festivities, creole sports and games, meetings and other social events. The cantora was the main access to music. As the author describes:

> It is common to both branches that singing is almost always in a very high tone; women will preferably use falsetto, which produces a strange impression to the German ear. The *cantoras* grow almost exclusively a light lyric, with joyful singing and dancing in stanzas of four and, less often, five verses; their instruments are the harp and guitar. Men, however, are devoted to the scarce remains of the epic song (romances), a serious lyric, a didactic nature and a *tenzón* (a poetic controversy, called «counterpoint»). The preferred form is the *décima espinela* metric, its instrument the loud *guitarrón*[189] in the central zone, and the *rabel* in the north and south. (Lenz 1919, 521-522)

These differences have been taken very seriously in the world of the Chilean payadores, who only recently—maybe in the last two decades—have started accepting women as *popular* poets. Carolina (Caro) López, cantora and payadora, has provided testimony of how these gender logic continue to operate in the present time:

> The thing of the paya is still super male-chauvinistic (…); formerly it was the female cantora with her guitar and harp, and the payador was a man, and the woman was not allowed to grab the guitarrón. Look, there are antecedents that confirm that yes, for example, Lázaro Salgado, who was one of the best payadores Chile has produced, his mother [Magdalena Aguirre], she did play the guitarrón (…) and well, there are also antecedents of Rosa Araneda, from the *lira popular*[190] [which were nineteenth-century broadsheets], and also other women who, they even invented that men were doing the verses for them and that they [(the women)] only signed them (…) and I believe many of them, maybe one can speculate that they tried to *payar*, but the environment was too hostile for them to get in. And also, well here it was Cecilia Astorga the first one to get on stage, and she was the only one for a long time, along with Myriam Arancibia, who was Pancho Astorga [another currently prestigious payador]'s wife. And from then on I think it was only a few years ago, from Antonieta onwards, more-less with Charawilla, who have been there for around the same years [roughly since 2009], getting on stage, you see? So there you start to believe, to say, 'oh yes, it is possible.' (Caro López, personal communication, 16th August 2017)

Another cantora and payadora, mentioned in this testimony, is Daniela Sepúlveda, or Charawilla, who also referred to the gender boundaries she has had to overcome and the gender statements she has come to develop as an integral part of her job as a musician:

> My most feminist act, in itself, is being a payadora. It is a feminist, political act (…) I feel very identified with feminist, anti-patriarchal, anti-capitalist discourse, and the one that goes against any repressive action towards the weaker, and under that perspective, being a cantora is also a super feminist action because music is a world of men, in the city… seeing it in a current context, in the city, it is something we discuss a lot with my [female] musician friends. (Charawilla, personal communication, 22nd August 2017)

[189] See Fig. 6.1
[190] See glossary.

*Figure 6.1. Daniela Sepúlveda (Charawilla) and her guitarrón*

*Source: Fieldwork photos and documents, 2016*

During the eighteenth century, there was an important leap in the rural-to-urban migration in Chile, which kept increasing until it peaked between the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. The formerly peasant cantora thus got settled in urban-popular neighbourhoods, establishing her own centres of *popular* recreation as the aforementioned chinganas or casas de canto. This way, the cantora went through several developments during the twentieth century. Juan Pablo González (2010) categorises these developments in the following figures: the *cantora*, the *cantante escénica*, the *cantautora* and the *estrella de la canción.*[191] In the early 1920s, the discographic and broadcasting industries development gave an impulse to the emergence of mass-cultures in Chile, bringing along the rise of *popular* groups in the Chilean public life, implying new challenges to the elite's hegemony. Thus the elites responded through the effort of preserving folkloric traditions that relived the cultural aspects of their landowning past. This is how the former cantora adopted a new role in broadening the access to Chilean folk music, becoming by the 1950s a 'cantante escénica' or artistic singer, who had polished her voice, refined her outfit, maintaining a wider repertoire and a much more empowered performative attitude. However, during the 1960s popular music shifted towards the concepts of author and composer, more related to the figure of

[191] I choose to include all of them in a broader concept of cantora, as this is the more general term for female singers that focus on folk roots music today.

the troubadour, with an important male bias that ended up displacing women from the stage and relegating them to the status of mere interpreter—just as it was proposed by Rodolfo Lenz in the early twentieth century. There was nonetheless an emblematic exception to this process: Violeta Parra, the great 'cantautora' of the twentieth century, who according to the author was able to emerge in contexts then dominated by men such as that of *popular* poetry; and able to, through the narrative of her lyrics, fulfil the same role as that expected from male composers. Furthermore, being born in a rural context, and departing from a peasant imaginary—the same which the State used to create its national symbols—she defied the hegemonic concept of national identity from the inside as she brought up the ethnic, social and cultural diversity that composes such identity (15-25). Finally, the 'estrella de la canción'—the closest to a contemporary pop star—was the category that represented young women that became soloist singers during the 1960s and 1970s, with the creation of an artistic image that exalted beauty and youth, as well as innovation, creativity and change.

The cantora held ambivalent roles in the development of urban-popular cueca. The world of the early-twentieth-century urban cantora was set in brothels and taverns in marginal neighbourhoods of the big cities in Chile—of which Santiago and Valparaíso have been the most referenced. This is the *popular* bohemian night, with the brutality and the excesses of street life. 'The Empress of the *fiesta,*' (Salinas and Navarrete 2012, 8) the cantora administered *popular* amusement, with her guests mostly men. These men took the cueca outside the tavern, to the streets. They sang cuecas as part of their daily routines while working as butchers, merchants, builders and in other industrial labours. Later, although the 'cantante' of the 1950s constituted a 'new and improved' version of the peasant cantora, those among the most prominent often had to be accompanied by male musicians who were in charge of 'manly' activities such as contract negotiations, publicity, copyrights and tour organisations (González 2010, 21). At the same time, they often took part in radio sketches that reflected openly sexist treatment to women. And even when the cantora managed to rise on her own and succeed within the Chilean *popular* music scene, her success was compromised continuously by the traditional social expectations within the limits of the domestic life of marriage and children (22). In the meantime, the cueca was sung from a male perspective, which, as seen, is notably reflected in the lyrics of the cuecas.

The way I see it, in the broader sense of the word the cantora is thus a dynamic archetype, continually offering new mechanisms to fulfil her social roles. Gender

relations provide an essential context to determine the nuances that these mechanisms have incorporated throughout her history. Although the cantora was seen as the ruler of the world of cueca and *popular* entertainment, the contexts of such entertainment have been consistently dominated by men. A male-prevailing culture in Chile, as in the rest of Latin America, has been (to say the least) bolstered by the Judaeo-Christian influence of its Spanish colonisers. Furthermore, Spanish conquerors took possession of native women initiating a miscegenation process that has left the profound mark of rape over this culture—with the racist and classist nuances imprinted by the colonial endeavour (on the discussion about the effects of the traumatising colonial inheritance see for example Paz 1981, Montecino 1997 or Baker 2008). The figure of the cantora has historically had to cope with sexist dynamics in the world of cueca and folk music, going back and forth between positions of subordination and empowerment. Despite her perpetual struggles for access, participation and social recognition, the history of Chilean *popular* poetry and music is filled with outstanding women that have set a precedent for the contemporary generation.[192]

As we will see, Violeta Parra is an elementary example of the breakdown of traditional gender role assignments. In addition to the fact that a large part of her work reflects how she exceptionally mastered the art of the décima, where she denounces all kinds of social injustices of her time, the (active) creative component of her artistic and musical work is undeniable. Furthermore, Violeta was an excellent interpreter of peasant traditions that she faithfully compiled and reinterpreted. And today she constitutes the quintessential referent for contemporary cantoras, as she appears to be one of the first women to start the process they are leading today in the worlds of cueca and folk music in Chile.

> I feel that with Violeta the figure of the female cantora was kind of spread out, right? It got to be known, but this thing of there being many, of it becoming massive, I feel that was a short time ago, I could tell you maybe a decade, ten years, and it has become increasingly massive (…) Formerly we were only a few women those of us who sang on our own, who had our own projects, most of them were in bands. But the soloist, composer woman, the cantora, I feel that became wide-spread only a short time ago. It has always been there, but I am talking mostly about how it became widely spread. (Miloska Valero, personal communication, 25th September 2017)

[192] Although it has been argued (Lenz 1919) that the higher arts of *canto a lo poeta* belong to the realm of men, Rosa Araneda (1853-1895), Petronila Orellana (1885-1963), and Violeta Parra (1917-1967) are just but a few examples of the most celebrated authors and composers in Chile since the nineteenth century.

## The cantora as embodied by Violeta Parra

An anecdote to illustrate Violeta's departure from the stereotype of the cantora of those years was when, according to Mario Rojas (2012), in the early 1950s Violeta Parra would have joined the group of guitarists—Humberto Campos[193] among them—who accompanied the famous Ester Soré, the *negra linda*, in one of her visits to Talca. They stayed, as they say, 'in the best hotel in Talca,' and at one of their gala dinners at the hotel, where they all dressed formally, Violeta appears 'as she commonly dressed, with long dark skirts and very long hair simply pulled back, defiant' (99). Sitting at the table, Ester Soré observed Violeta, and asked: 'What do you do?' '—I'm an artist... I'm a folklorist.' '—Uhmm, I have never heard of you,' said the negra linda. '—I don't care, with time, I'll be much more famous than you' (99). And, undeniably, so she is.

Violeta Parra changed the paradigm of the urbanised and stylised cantante that in those years revolved around a creole product. Furthermore, she took the peasant referent to new levels with her creativity and subversion even before those social, political, and academic institutions that produced nationalistic creole folklore did. Those were institutions that placed women as interpreters rather than creators; relegated women to the world of the fiesta, the cueca and the tonada, without recognising their former participation in the world of *popular* poetry; indicated that in the national music the only accepted instruments were the guitar, the harp and the accordion (Rojas 2012, 97); surrounded the cantora with male musicians and representatives; and institutions like the Church, which instead of settling beside the peasant, the poor, and the marginalised of society, was erected at the centre of power imposing its hegemony, becoming an accomplice of severe injustices that were duly denounced by the artist in her own time. Thus, early on, Violeta Parra offered the modern *popular* cantora a fresh and different role model.

[193] Humberto Campos (1924-1982) was a famous Chilean musician most widely known by his highly skilful guitar playing style. He worked as a session guitarist, recording for groups such as Los Cuatro Huasos or Los Quincheros, and he came to be considered as 'the first guitar in Chile' ('*la primera guitarra de Chile*') (González and Rolle 2005, 389).

*Figure 6.2. Violeta Parra*

*Source: own elaboration*

From 1953, Violeta Parra began to travel through the fields of the central zone of Chile, a route that in 1957 would extend to north and south (González, Ohlsen and Rolle 2009, 380). In these journeys, she contemplated and assimilated the poetic and musical craft of peasant singers and *popular* poets, and then reinterpreted it in a way that was naturally honest and surprisingly innovative in her original repertoire. It was her creativeness that took her to Europe in the mid-1950s, to participate in the World Youth Festival in Warsaw—and it was then that Violeta experienced one of the greatest tragedies that a human being can experience when her infant daughter Rosa Clara died in 1955. A desolated mother, woman and artist, she decided to stay in Europe, arriving later in Paris which, welcomed her in a surprising way, as her own words in *Ecran* journal (1956) reveal:

> My sincerity in the interpretation is natural and comes from a powerful and undeniable root: the folk root of our Chilean countryside (...) This has been understood by the European public of all social and cultural sectors (...) I love [Paris] with an unlimited tenderness, because here I found the solution to my artistic restlessness and because it accepted me as I am. (*Ecran* in González, Ohlsen and Rolle 2009, 381)

From 1961, the consolidation of Violeta Parra's creative impetus began, a process that is marked by certain milestones among which her return to Paris and her residence in Europe for three years appear to be especially relevant. The songs that she composed

during this period turned her into 'the authentic founder of the New Chilean Song' (González, Ohlsen and Rolle 2009, 387) with a discourse that 'denounces and innovates, proposing, finally, from the song, a new society' (386). Violeta returned to Chile in 1965, settling in her tent in the district of La Reina, Santiago, where she spent her last years of life, committing suicide in 1967. Since then, her fame would only grow, constituting her as the referent par excellence of each cantor and cantora from the New Chilean Song until today (392).

Contemporary urban cantoras have often found in Violeta their first gateway to the world of Chilean traditional music. The combination of roles embodied by Violeta Parra and how she conducted her life as a composer, interpreter, researcher, mother and household administrator resonates with many of the challenges that cantoras have to face today. Since the early years of the cueca revival that started in the 1990s, in a time where sexist gender barriers seem to have been considerably moderated, there is a new female irruption—perhaps not yet a movement—that has developed its own mechanisms of expression, finding new ways to sing the cueca and other folk forms from an empowered female voice. Let us now examine what contemporary cantoras and female cueca groups, currently developing new artistic proposals in the scene of urban cueca, have to say about their own activity and the current significance of the figure of the cantora.

## Contemporary Urban Cantoras

As discussed above, Latin American feminism has been shaped by the influence of feminist struggles both in Europe and the United States, as well as by the particularities of regional postcolonial contexts. Specifically, there have been three critical theoretical influences: the francophone scholars led by Simone De Beauvoir since the 1950s, the queer turn following Judith Butler's views in the 1990s, and the most contemporary 'decolonial feminism' which, in resonance with aforementioned black feminism and postmodernist feminism, has sought to include those 'women located at the peripheries,' arguing that colonialism is not only a racial but also a gendered phenomenon which operates following patriarchal logic (Castro 2018, 39-40). One of the issues that feminist struggles have focused on during the past decades is gender-based violence, notably since the concept of *femicide*—defined as the killing of women because of their status as women—was first coined by Diana Russel in 1976. Although some steps have been taken since the 1970s—such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993), and in Latin America, the OAS Inter-American Convention on the

Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women (1994)—the problem continues to be of high relevance and validity in the present time (Cabral and Acacio 2016, 173-174). In this context, during the past three years, the articulation of a robust feminist movement has taken place across Latin America, starting in Argentina and spreading globally. Under the consign of *Ni una menos* ('not one less'), the first public manifestation occurred in June 2015 due to the murder of two women in Argentina, which detonated massive demonstrations in several Argentinean cities, as well as in Santiago (Chile) and Montevideo (Uruguay). Since then, the movement has spread internationally with great success. It has done so primarily through the social networks, through which feminist organisations and individual women across the world have been able to exchange the theoretical and political contents behind their demands, as well as localised experiences of violence, thus reaching large scales (Castro 2018, 40-41).

The particularity of these struggles in the Latin American region during the second half of the twentieth century resides in the fact that they have taken place 'in a context of political crises and dictatorships' (34). This has also meant that in Chile, the cueca revival process that has taken place during the past three decades has coincided with the historical contingencies implicated in the process of return to democracy since 1990, and with the intensification of the feminist struggles that have followed especially during the past decade. Thus, it is worth acknowledging that the cueca revival process has been embedded in a process of substantial cultural, social and political changes in the country, especially concerning the women's social situation. In this sense, the process of insertion of women into the male-dominated world of cueca and folk music—or *popular* music with folk roots—has been infused by the contemporary sensibilities towards gender issues. And such sensibilities have one way or another affected (1) the ways in which the cantoras express themselves aesthetically—through musical, poetic and performative devices—(2) the ways in which they articulate their social discourses, and (3) the ways in which they understand themselves in the context of their artistic activity.

In the final part of this chapter, I consider interviews with 14 different cantoras and/or female band members who are (or were at the time of the interview) either fully engaged within the urban-popular cueca scene in Santiago or Valparaíso—such as the case of *Las Pecadoras*, *Flor de Juana*, *Las Torcazas*, *Calila Lila*, *Ellas*, *Las Indignadas*, and *Las Primas*—or are more indirectly (still actively) related to it by participating on a broader urban-popular music scene—like Andrea Andreu, Caro López, Miloska Valero, Natalia Ahumada, Claudia Mena, Tatiana Passy Lucero and Daniela Sepúlveda. Let us

now analyse each of these developments through the voices of these women I have had the chance to interview during the past years.

*Figure 6.3. Flor de Juanas*


*Source: Fieldwork photos and documents, 2017*

## Gendered experience of women in the urban-popular cueca scene

The experience of gender-based hostility in the world of cueca, and the necessity of reacting against it has been largely discussed through these lines, and many cantoras can offer vivid testimonies of these. Some of these experiences have occurred in broader contexts of music, such as music schools, and folk practices more in general. Andrea Andreu has shared her experiences of machismo in the context of her music studies at Universidad de Chile. For her, forming the second female university Tuna in Chile meant

> (…) receiv[ing] a lot of insults (…) very offensive, aggressive phrases, [being treated] as a whore because you want to lead the life of a wanderer, an easy life (…). There we fought hard arguing that wasn't our case, that university-life could be carried in different ways. The university life linked to the Tuna [or Estudiantina] aimed to satisfy our main needs, such as travelling, learning, raising money to pay for university funds, university needs, making relations, developing repertoires with the typical instrumentation of that group, generating human learnings (…) which are all needs for human development, beyond gender. So in that place, I saw [machismo] very strongly at that moment. (Andrea Andreu, 12th February 2018)

Similarly, Miloska Valero has commented on her experience as a music student in university, where she experienced

> (…) highly sexist situations studying music. When I studied, for example, there were only a few of us who were women (…). There were always quite 'funny' characters (…) who made very stupid comments like trying to keep one beneath them (…), I don't know, for example, once someone told me 'hey, you play the guitar well, you play like a man,' and I said 'aaah, look, I

> thought both men and women could play the same' — 'no, it's men who play the guitar more, women are the ones who sing.' (Personal communication, 25th September 2017)

This kind of instrumentalist gender prejudice is wide-spread in Chile, which is why it is so important for female groups and soloist interpreters to be able to accompany themselves with an instrument. Even Diego Barrera, my harp teacher, laughingly told me once that his own master, Chabelita Fuentes, had often told him to 'play like a man!' when teaching him how to play the guitar. The cantora and payadora Caro López has had to cope with comments of the same tone:

> The other day a payador told me 'you know that in Chile, women will never reach the level men have reached,' (…) I know that it will happen one day (…). [This was] in the context of the payadores, but I believe that it's also assimilating that women are always a little lower than men in everything. And he said, 'it's not due to intelligence' he said 'it's because of skill, and other things that women don't have' and I told him, 'Look, I think of course, if you compare it with the time that men have been *payando*, and women, since when? There is a difference, you see? But I don't think that women can't get to reach that level of improvisation skills.' (Caro López, personal communication, 16th August 2017)

She also reflects on the tacit, often unconscious machismo that pervades the paya environment:

> Recently (…) we went to Patagonia, and I threw a [rhymed] toast that I have that talks about women, that we ought to stop violence against women, and the men remained just silent, staring, serious, and the women were the only ones that applauded, so there you see how (…) and it's like, wow, tough to face those things. (Caro López, personal communication, 16th August 2017)

Also within the cueca environment, several cantoras have expressed how difficult it has been for them to integrate the canto a la rueda circles, as these still entail a hostile, competitive environment that is 'ruled by the loudest.' As some of them remember from their starting years,

> For me at the beginning it was very difficult, I talk about the context of the *rueda* when I started singing there, it was quite complex, hard, just as they wouldn't let me sing, they wouldn't let me into the rueda. And so little by little it opened, as they got to know you, so in a certain way in this environment I had to put on a shell, as there's this issue of the tradition of the toughest, and the one who knows her/his stuff can throw her/himself to the rueda, the firmest. And that still functions that way. (…) on the other hand, there are also people who don't care and who integrate you, but my path was like very gradually understanding how the dynamics of the rueda were carried out, which are sexist, because it is sexist, (…) I mean we live in *machismo*, and when it was developed, it was like this from the beginning and little by little, it has been opening up. (Kathy Soto, personal communication, 19th January 2017)

> In the practice of every Tuesday of going to the *rueda*, there I played [the guitar], there are always just a few women who play, and since the issue of the tones was so tough, where the men brought [cuecas] up once and again, I grabbed the guitar and played, and we [women] could sing, it was like war. In that practice, I affirmed myself in terms of the volume and firm strumming of the cueca. (Claudia Mena, personal communication 28th July 2018)

*Las Torcazas* is the first all-female cueca group of this new cueca wave. They were founded 20 years ago, in 1998, having also experienced several sexist practices against them throughout the years, especially in the context of music production:

> Unfortunately, I'm not saying everyone but most of the producers or the people who hire you, and maybe that's a gender problem, that suddenly it doesn't matter how you play, you see, like 'ah those girls are hot' and they call them (…) and that's super tough. (…) We never got doors shut, but in the end the musical work, I think it came in second place. We cared a lot about that, but our product wasn't understood, I mean, they preferred other things. But we still worked on what we want, I mean we haven't pulled out of composing our arrangements, no, because that is what we like and the stamp we have had over these twenty years.
>
> In fact, once they wanted us for a TV production (…), and it was [our thing], then they were changing, then they were doing strange things, and finally they wanted us to get on stage, sitting on a straw bundle dressed like a *china*, and it's not that we find it ugly (…) [but] we said no, because we were not going to change our essence to appear on TV (…). And maybe that did hurt us, but we couldn't. (…) we made the melody of a cueca, and finally, as we said no, another group recorded our melody, they used it for the project anyway, and it went on TV. (Las Torcazas, personal communication, 24th August 2017)

## Social and aesthetic discourses

The field of folk music in Chilean urban centres is constituted by several different social actors. While the academic world has always been present, providing spaces for reflection and analysis on socio-musical developments within the field, the music industry has been crucial to shaping the imaginary of Chilean folkloric culture that most Chileans hold in the present time. And such an industry—including record labels, radios, performance venues, festivals, TV productions, etc.—was for many years taken as a hostage of the military dictatorship, leaving spaces for performance exclusively reserved for those groups who would not entail any social or political threats to the regime, and who would accommodate to the nationalistic symbolism promoted during those years. Thus, folkloric production was curtailed, leaving artistic expression frozen in a politically innocuous sphere. More contemporary discourses only began to re-emerge after democracy was restored in 1990, and already by the 2000s, these changes were widely visible. A vital component of this change is the new ways in which women are participating in the folk scenes in Chile, and particularly in the scene of urban-popular cueca.

Quite importantly, there is among most of my consultants an aim to innovate and to make changes in the cueca in a way that will allow them to practise it more naturally as women. This has basically meant accommodating key signatures to their natural vocal pitches, opening up new spaces for them to practise more freely—like the *ruedas de cantoras*—and changing traditional lyrics and creating new ones, in the attempt of contributing to the genre through the artistic expression of gendered points of view. Poetry, music and visual-performative styles are at the service of said expression. Although most of them affirmed they were not making feminist statements directly, and that they did not have the need to fight their way into the scene of cueca, they were all interested in installing a female perspective within the musical scene. In other words, they

aimed to sing from a woman's perspective, with a female voice and in a female pitch, about historical female archetypes, and about the totality of the experience of being a woman.

In terms of their musical referents, while most of the female cueca groups referred to *Los Chileneros*—recognised as the founders of the urban-popular cueca style—though prioritising their original repertoires, individual cantoras have also mentioned figures such as Margot Loyola, Violeta Parra, Chabelita Fuentes, and María Ester Zamora—as well as many unknown rural cantoras they have met and learned from in their own fieldwork—as their most significant musical referents. In any case, it is imperative to stress that most of them identified themselves more closely with the figure of the cantora rather than that of the 'cuequera,' and this has much to do with the weight they assign to their musical referents, and with their gender perspectives as well.

Las Pecadoras (2009-) constitute an excellent example of a female cueca group whose central objective is to deliver a social discourse that is able to include a female (and feminist) perspective within the world of the cueca, and they mainly do this through poetry. Most of their cuecas have been written by the band leader, Daniela Meza, who either creates new songs or modifies traditional ones in order to eliminate certain patriarchal values that are embedded within the lyrical language of the cueca. An emblematic example of this is their new version of the famous 'Arremángate el Vestido' (the first verse of which we saw above), which they interpret in their album *Cuecas por Rebeldía* (Rebel Cuecas) by consecrated Valparaíso cueca singer, Lucy Briceño:

*Table 6.4. Arremángate el vestido (Las Pecadoras)*

| **Spanish Lyrics (Las Pecadoras' Version)** | **English Translation[194]** |
|---|---|
| Arremángate el vestido<br>para zapatear la cueca<br>que bailando se alimentan<br>las almas que viven secas.<br><br>Date la vuelta niña<br>dátela fuerte<br>para ver si bailando<br>tiembla la muerte.<br><br>Tiembla la muerte, sí,<br>diablos y santos,<br>cuando siente la tierra<br>tu luz y encanto<br><br>Ya encontraste la calma,<br>para tu alma. | Roll your dress up<br>so you can stomp the cueca<br>as by dancing, the dry souls<br>can be fed.<br><br>Turn around girl,<br>turn around hard<br>to see if by dancing<br>you make death tremble.<br><br>You make death tremble, yes,<br>devils and saints,<br>when the land feels<br>your light and charm.<br><br>Now you have found calm,<br>for your soul. |

[194] See Table 6.3 for original lyrics by Mario Catalán and English translation.

Another example of using the cueca poetry as a device for delivering a social discourse is that by the cantora and payadora Caro López, who wrote a cueca inspired in the case of Nabila Rifo, a woman who was brutally attacked by her ex-husband in 2016. This was a high-profile case in Chile, firstly, because of the cruelty of the attack (in which, after beating her until she fell unconscious, the attacker literally ripped the victim's eyes out). Secondly, because around a year later the Supreme Court ruled to lower the sentence from 26 years (for frustrated femicide and serious injuries) to 18 years, as the evidence was not enough to demonstrate the attacker's 'intention of murder,' therefore eliminating the charge of frustrated femicide. This generated fury among the public and accusations that the Chilean State sanctioned male-chauvinistic violence. Caro López wrote this cueca for a festival, though it did not get selected:

*Table 6.5. Uno que juró quererte (Caro López)*

| **Spanish Lyrics (Original)** | **English Translation** |
|---|---|
| Uno que juró quererte<br>quiso acabar con tu vida<br>y le ganaste a la muerte<br>pese a los golpes y heridas.<br><br>Te golpeó en la cabeza,<br>quiso tu muerte.<br>Te dejo abandonada,<br>tu triste suerte.<br><br>Tu triste suerte, ay sí,<br>sacó tus ojos,<br>y con maldad sus manos<br>tiñó de rojo.<br><br>Y una ciega justicia<br>lo beneficia | One who swore to love you<br>tried to end your life<br>and you defeated death<br>in spite of the beats and wounds.<br><br>He struck you in your head,<br>he wanted to kill you.<br>He abandoned you,<br>your sad luck.<br><br>Your sad luck, oh yes,<br>he ripped your eyes out,<br>and, with evil, he covered<br>his hands in red.<br><br>And a blind justice<br>benefits him. |

She explained that part of her role as a cantora was to 'make visible the complaints of *el pueblo*, of one part of *el pueblo* such as the women…' (personal communication 16th August 2017). She also clarified that, even though this cueca is quite literal, as she wanted to make people feel 'the crudity of the case,' in general she aims for a more complex poetic expression, and she feels it is necessary for women to do so in order to open up a valuable space for themselves in the world of Chilean *popular* poetry. Quite importantly, this reflects a step forward, departing from the mere statement of being women, towards raising a (philosophical, social, aesthetic) discourse that emerges from that 'being-women'—in other words, reflecting one of the differences between second-wave and later feminisms:

> (…) it's OK to sometimes position oneself as a feminist woman… but today I see several things. As a payadora, the machismo that I experience is tough, and as I have got more involved, it gets increasingly difficult, I get on stage with them [payadores] (…), I don't have to say that I am a woman so much because they can see that I am a woman. That is an issue. What do we want to say? What interests us? (…) The man installs his topics just as he does, you see, he doesn't constantly affirm 'I am a man.' In the end, it is to place oneself at the same level, just as them [men]. And that, one can do through discourse. It is not about constantly saying 'I'm a woman, I'm a woman.' It's an exercise that we don't master yet because it is too new both in the cueca and in the paya. (Personal communication, 15th November 2017)

*Las Indignadas* is another cueca group that emerged in response to social demands, which in this case were those of the student movement in 2011. They started backing up communitarian and political activities related to student demonstrations and also to other labour demands in and around Santiago. 'We started with traditional cueca, and at a given moment, there was the need for composing cuecas that spoke of what we were supporting' (personal communication, Kathy Soto, January 2018). Although many people supported them, as they were filling a gap in the world of the cueca, they also had multiple detractors:

> Many said that we didn't sing cuecas. They said that the cueca couldn't be related to political topics… they did it behind our backs, because as we were women, nobody told us, and later we would find out that people were saying things. (Personal communication, Kathy Soto, 18th January 2018)

The soloist cantora Miloska Valero has also relied on poetry to express a social discourse. She refers to her own discourse as 'holistic' in the sense that she addresses social and political topics as well as narrations of anecdotic characters that she comes across, issues of personal development, nature, etc. Social injustice is a particularly sensitive topic based on her growing up experience, out of which she wrote a cueca when she was 17 years old, about injustice in the world:

*Table 6.6. Se me acaba la paciencia (Miloska Valero)*

| **Spanish Lyrics (Original)** | **English Translation** |
|---|---|
| Se me acaba la paciencia<br>¿para cuándo la injusticia?<br>y me agarra la impotencia<br>cuando veo las noticias.<br><br>Unos tienen de sobra<br>y a otros nos falta.<br>Mi vida, y los que tienen<br>siguen teniendo.<br><br>Siguen teniendo, sí<br>y al que le falta<br>le roban hasta el alma<br>si es que se puede.<br><br>El quedarse esperando<br>nos va matando. | I am running out of patience,<br>when will injustice stop?<br>and I'm captured by impotence<br>when I watch the news.<br><br>Some have more than enough<br>and others nothing.<br>My life, and those who have<br>continue to have.<br><br>Continue to have, yes<br>and the one who lacks<br>is even robbed of the soul<br>if possible.<br><br>This keeping on waiting<br>is killing us. |

Claudia Mena is only starting her career as a soloist cantora, and she has been learning under the wing of Margot Loyola, first, and now María Ester Zamora. Her learning process has been intense and prolific in the sense that in a few years, she has absorbed an impressively vast and varied repertoire of Chilean and Latin American traditional music. However, her ultimate aim is also to create: 'More than being an interpreter, I'd like to compose my songs, (…) because there are things that have to be said, and the music helps a lot to transmit this whole feeling' (personal communication, 28th July 2018).

The cantora and payadora Daniela Sepúlveda (Charawilla) has also tried to infuse her work with feminist views. When participating in the group *Ellas*, from Valparaíso, she had to combine her personal motivations with the interests of all of the other band members, who were not as explicitly feminist as she was. Together they were a multifaceted mixture whose central purpose was to present a solid musical proposal, combined with the humour and mischief of *popular* poetry—even including the tradition of canto a lo poeta, considering Charawilla's talent as a payadora. They aimed to open up a valid space for themselves as female musicians, standing on stage by themselves, without needing male musicians. As Tatiana, another of the band members explained, many cantoras in Valparaíso perform as singers and are accompanied by male musicians, where 'the musical weight is given by him, not by her' (personal communication, 22nd January 2017). In this case, there is a precise aim of being self-sufficient female musicians, with an eclectic musical proposal, which includes 'cuecas from the north, southern cuecas, everything. Each one carries her rock, blues, jazz past (…) With Tati, we are musicians and cantoras before we are cuequeras' (Charawilla, personal communication, 22nd August 2017). Gender struggles, however, have never been absent for this group, especially in the context of the urban cueca scene in Valparaíso, where some cases of abuse have been outspoken and actively rejected. Based on real experiences of gender violence within their local environment, the group made clear their stand with the following cueca, 'Mal Sueño' (2016), written by Tatiana Passy Lucero:

*Table 6.7. Mal Sueño (Tatiana Passy Lucero)*

| Spanish Lyrics (Original) | English Translation |
|---|---|
| Un mal sueño tuve anoche,<br>me arrastraban por el suelo,<br>me escupían en la cara,<br>por la causa de los celos.<br><br>Y en esa noche indigna<br>en la inconciencia<br>callaron las canciones<br>de la inocencia.<br><br>De la inocencia, sí,<br>muere la flor;<br>qué puede cometer<br>el desamor.<br><br>En esta noche siento<br>sueño violento. | I had a bad dream last night,<br>I was dragged along the floor,<br>I was spit in my face,<br>for the cause of jealousy.<br><br>And on that undignified night<br>in the unconsciousness<br>the songs of innocence<br>were silenced.<br><br>Of innocence, yes,<br>the flower dies;<br>what heartbreak<br>can come to commit.<br><br>On this night I feel<br>a violent dream. |

Las Torcazas also expressed the central importance of the musical weight in their proposal, aiming 'that it can be shown through our music (…) that we are prepared, that we have studies, that we have studied the style a bit, that you can see that in our performance' (Romina, personal communication 24th August 2017). Throughout their long trajectory, they have also emphasised the dress code, putting every aesthetic decision at the service of 'reflecting all of the women's facets,' always attempting to be comfortable with what they are expressing.

Flor de Juanas (fig. 6.3) is a relatively new cueca ensemble that was born under the motivation of making a different cueca by presenting it in a new format, never before attempted: a *murga cuequera*. Murga is a form of Uruguayan *popular* musical theatre that is performed during carnival season. According to Josi, the band leader, just as the murga is the Uruguayan carnival, the cueca is the carnival of Chile. Performance is thus an essential feature of this group, through which they can express their discourse:

> …we talk about the woman, the woman in every sense of the word, we speak from the gut, more than from a political or politically correct standpoint, we speak from the gut, women go through stuff, and that is told through the cueca, that is told through singing, see? (…) And it is necessary because the cueca is the queen of the party, but why not say more? we must say more things, that's what we believe, and to use this space to say all what we think, what we feel, you have to throw everything up (…) the voice of the woman is necessary, it's strong, it's powerful, and it is powerful to see 14 female singers on stage talking from women to women and men, so that's already impressive. (Personal communication, 12th January 2017)

Another group whose artistic proposal is fundamentally based on visual-performative devices is *Calila Lila*. What they want is to change the image of the cueca, articulating it with a more contemporary world of drama, which is their university background. Thus, they present characters and masks which are inspired by traditional

urban-popular characters. They offer an exciting and colourful performance, which they regard as a radical visual proposal, very distanced from folkloric aesthetics, 'using skirts and trousers with bright colours, not using curves and manuscript typographies, [but rather] printed letters and straight lines,' giving it an 'electric' touch. Rather than working from poetry, they base their proposal on 'theatricality,' being 'dedicated to strengthening the scene, for example, because this is our priority, to be able to offer forty minutes of magic' (Paulina, personal communication, 19th January 2017).

### Who is the contemporary urban cantora?

Urban cantoras today relate quite diversely to the traditional concept of the cantora that I have attempted to outline through these lines. Some of them consciously embrace it as the archetype that guides their own artistic activity; they might, for example, conduct field research in the Chilean countryside where they get to meet rural cantoras developing a friendship and apprenticeship with them, just as the famous Violeta Parra and Margot Loyola would have done in their day. Others seem reluctant to employ the term cantora, as they fear its usage does not reflect its historic weight. Whatever the case may be, the truth is that all of the female singers I have interviewed have expressed great respect for the figure of the traditional cantora, relating to it in one way or another. They understand it as a historical lineage of Chilean women, also as a theoretical, academic construction, as a model of female musical activity, as an archetype of womanhood, and as a treasured Chilean tradition.

With a member who is a historian, the group Las Primas started from the intellectual interest of historically reconstructing the 'craft' of the cantora, and the world of cueca. In this sense, they have carried out a thorough study of the musical language of the cantora in order to be able to faithfully comply with its elements and contribute with a fresh proposal that can go beyond pure imitation. To this end, the members of Las Primas started working in the format of a Chilean folk lab 'that didn't only include the cuecas but also a female repertoire in general,' which they studied during a year, by 'listening to records, listening to cantoras, analysing lyrics, the topics, we searched, we made quite fine selections of what we felt that was the most [representative] of the [historical] female repertoire' (Leslie Becerra, personal communication, 23rd January 2017).

Their music is diverse, as they try to encompass the whole of the cantora's universe, and they thus see themselves as part of the flow of *popular* wisdom, of a lineage

that started centuries ago, and which has influenced the whole spectrum of the cueca singers. As one of them explained to me:

> Many of the formulas with which *Los Chileneros* sang, they learned from the cantoras. The animations or that form of singing very high-pitched… Do you see that men try to get to those high tones? That's from the cantoras, so it's beautiful because this thing of animating the parties with cuecas and with songs of devils and all of this is very proper and it was the sovereignty of women for centuries and suddenly at one time men assumed that same role, and now women take it back. (Leslie Becerra, personal communication, 23rd January 2017)

Miloska Valero also feels that she belongs to this long-standing tradition of the cantora:

> I feel more comfortable [when I am called cantora] than when, for example, they call me a composer or a *cantautora* (…) it has a special connotation, it's as if I formed part of a lineage (…), a *popular* Chilean folk character (…), the typical image of the woman with the guitar (…). For example, the Colombian cantoras are something different, they are more like [artistic] singers, always accompanied by a band, etc. On the other hand, the Chilean cantora is the typical woman of the country who, after doing all of the household chores, grabbed her guitar and started singing some songs. (Personal communication, 25th September 2017)

Andrea Andreu is another soloist cantora whose artistic inquiry is primarily related to the understanding of the traditional Chilean guitar. Being a close friend and apprentice of Margot Loyola, she holds a tight personal bond with tradition, which is the undeniable source of inspiration for her prolific creative activity. The relation between her traditionalist and innovative impetus is what defines her work as an interpreter of Chilean folk roots music:

> First, there is a conviction, and there is a decision. And from that, all the needs [of] my soul are released (…) and among those, the things that I need are: to create, to interpret and to know. These are like the three fundamental pillars that I have. I start from the interpretation of traditional music to understand how the sounds of the ancients sound. And creation is fundamentally inspired on that. And also the creation is inspired by the search for knowledge. I feel that to develop a musical line, especially folk-roots music, one cannot repeat songs only, one has to know and be aware of what one is doing to be able to deliver knowledge, not just entertainment. (…) I do it first because I need to do it. And secondly, I do it because I feel that the diffusion of folk roots music, which has to do with the identity and this imperative need that the ego has to recognise itself with the environment; we won't be able to do that if we don't know the characteristics of the identity of our environment. So in that sense my research, my work, my interpretation, my creation, everything is always addressing a didactic line, you see? So creation in the end for me doesn't abandon tradition, because it is the creation that leaves a record of what is happening today. (Andrea Andreu, personal communication, 12th February 2018)

In this sense, Andrea's musical activity is in itself what constitutes her as a cantora in her contemporary environment, and although she does not seem to care much about how people label her—as a singer, a songwriter, an interpreter, a guitarist, etc.—she understands that she actually embodies the cantora's craft in her daily activity:

> In a way, all of us [women] who do something related, are the updated reading of the cantora, where the cantora no longer exists in rural areas only (…) if we see it within a current analysis, yes, I could be a cantora within a current context. Because I didn't go looking for the *guitarra*

> *traspuesta*[195] [or transposed guitar], it came to me while I was in my natural habitat. (…) What I do with the guitar is all from oral tradition, in the way I learn it, the only time I rationalise what I do on the guitar is when I have to play with another musician (…). If I don't have to play with another person, I'm not interested, I don't look for or think what it is that I'm playing, I'm only guided by the sonority (…). The definition of cantora that is still known responds to an era, you see?, which is the definition that must have been given around the 1960s, it seems to me, from the moment they started to systematise and classify everything, to generate a well-ordered panorama of what exists. But from the 1960s until now it has changed so much that we will have to continue observing to see if the term 'cantora' dies because rural singers will no longer exist… (Personal communication, 12th February 2018)

Similarly, the cantora and payadora Caro López explains that she is only now beginning to understand the concept of the cantora in all its significance, as well as how it can be applied today.

> I think that I'm only just understanding the role she had, that she has today (…). There are people who say 'no, the cantoras have already died,' but you go a little bit out of Santiago and [even] right here in Santiago, there are plenty (…). There was a moment, well, as under dictatorship it happened with many things, with the paya also at one time, that there were no *guitarroneros* left… but [later] people were able to join, who got interested in singing, and today there is a strong movement I would say, even in Santiago, of young people to sing, these kinds of older things, you see, like tonadas, but really old, and to go looking for things that are not the same repertoire, for example, of the *conjunto folclórico* [or folkloric projection groups]; it's something else, because the conjunto is a representation. It's a label that they placed from academia, (…) I don't consider myself a folklorist, for example, I'm not a student of folklore; I just do it. (Caro López, personal communication, 16th August 2017)

Another soloist cantora, from Valparaíso, also possesses a broad concept of the figure and the activity of the cantora, as she relates it with a certain idea of womanhood:

> The flow is too wide to say, 'no, I'm [only] going through this branch,' (…) we're all going in a similar direction, from a female view. We don't see the world as men understand it, we don't understand it in the same way. We seek to contain everything; that everything functions correctly. Not only the food but your interview, what I am talking about, what she is attending to, the girl is baking the bread, you see, we are all in an ideal as to cover everything we need to do (…) and at the same time that everything works properly. (Natalia Ahumada, personal communication, 22nd January 2017)

On the other hand, younger cantoras and members of cueca bands seem to be more distrustful of what they perceive as a distortion of the concept of the cantora. Out of respect, they seem to be reluctant to employ the term cantora as it is traditionally understood over their musical activity. Such is the case with Paulina Martínez, from Calila Lila, or Kathy Soto, member of the same band as well as of Las Indignadas, and the young soloist cantora Claudia Mena:

> The contemporary cantora, the modern cantora, is where we position ourselves (…) I mean, we aren't rural cantoras, we live in the city, we live with technology, see? (…) We perform, we go out at night alone, aaaah would you imagine? [(She says laughing jokingly)]. (Paulina Martínez, personal communication, 19th January 2017)

> …I have intense conflicts with the issue of the cantora and how it is treated and how it has been handled here in Santiago. I don't feel like a cantora, I sing cuecas but I'm not a cantora, I enjoy

[195] See glossary.

> the cueca, I sing it, I'm going to do it until I get bored, but I think there is misinformation and there is no debate about the concept of the cantora. At what point am I a cantora? Alright, I sing ten cuecas, so I'm a cantora? For me, that's not it. I don't dare to say it, I think it's too big for me. I feel more like an interpreter. (Kathy Soto, personal communication, 18th January 2018)

> It's an issue because I don't consider myself a cantora, it's hard for me, but they've already told me off so many times. I dedicate myself to singing, to collecting and to transmitting. A cantora, like Margot [Loyola]'s book said, must be available for whatever is needed (…) I go to everything, a wake, a *trilla* [or threshing festival], a birthday (…) yes I could be, but I still have a hard time taking it on, but deep down that's what it is. In my family I got to be with an aunt, of the line of the great-grandmothers, who was a cantora, of the country, a real one, I didn't collect anything from her but I have on that side some cantora aunts, I didn't get to know one of them and another one is in Valdivia and I have compiled some tonadas and cuecas from her. (Claudia Mena, personal communication, 28th July 2018)

## CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, I have attempted to deconstruct the notion of the traditional Chilean cantora and its contemporary applications within the world of Chilean urban folk music, and how these applications are in permanent dialogue with the historical, social struggles of Chilean and Latin American women. I have tried to do so by firstly reviewing the history of Chilean and Latin American feminisms, as informed by the feminist movements in Europe and the United States as well as by their own postcolonial heritage. While Simone De Beauvoir's and Judith Butler's contributions have been essential for the creation of a theoretical framework that still feeds the regional movement today, 'decolonial' feminism seems to be the strongest and most up to date line of thought that guides their current activity.

Secondly, I have analysed the path of the construction of gender identities in the context of the colonial reality of Latin America, understanding that the figure of the traditional Chilean cantora emerged precisely within said context. The particularity of Latin America resides in the fact that gender identities have been founded on what Sonia Montecino called the 'original scene,' the seizure of native women by white European men, which had its correlate in the geopolitical process of colonisation of the continent. The space of sexuality has thus become a battlefield where practices of domination and resistance have been exercised on every level, which can be observed in the dynamics of certain Latin American musical genres such as reggaetón, and most importantly for our purposes, urban-popular cueca in Chile. The cueca has proved itself to be a mechanism of resistance, not only from a social hierarchy perspective, as we saw in chapter 5, but also from a gender hierarchy perspective, taking the model of the cantora as a performative device to exercise such resistance. Violeta Parra appears as one of the first and most iconic cantoras in doing so, offering an innovative path for the cantoras to follow.

Thirdly, I have tried to follow up these processes—the articulation of feminist struggles in Chile in dialogue with the current development of the figure of the cantora—in the context of the past three decades, where the revival of the Chilean cueca, and more generally, Chilean folk music, has taken place. It is not by chance that the cueca revival process gained strength just a few years following the return to democracy in Chile in 1990. Such an emancipatory process gradually unleashed the force of several minority groups whose life and activity had remained underground during the authoritarian period. Thus, women began joining the urban folkloric circles from unprecedented roles, offering new aesthetics and discourses that contributed to opening up a space for an active female figure in the world of Chilean folk music, and particularly in the male-dominated world of urban-popular cueca. By venturing into artistic activities such as authorship—either mastering music composition or *popular* poetry writing skills, going beyond the mere role of interpreter and entertainer—and musicianship—by being able to stand on their own as instrumentalists without requiring the support of male musicians—they were also able to challenge certain naturalised gender stereotypes and roles in the realm of Chilean music. Even though the application of the concept of traditional cantora is still contested in the field, the cantoras all have a deep understanding of it, and in this sense, they all relate to it, even when showing reluctance to apply the tremendous responsibility that such identity entails over their own musical activity.

Ultimately, despite of many of them not having an explicitly feminist outlook, contemporary urban cantoras, as I like to call them, have constituted themselves individually as dexterous creators, interpreters, authors and musicians, a tacit feminist act in which these musicians have performatively constructed identities that challenge the binary logic of patriarchy within the field of cueca, constituting it once more like a field of resistance. Moreover, such identities are beginning to articulate a collective movement through several associative practices that can be observed in the field. The *ruedas de cantoras* across Chile represent just one example (which deserves its own analysis); but also the getting together of cantoras forming all-female bands and the organisation of events such as the *Cumbre de Guitarra Traspuesta* (or Transposed Guitar Summit) or *La Matria Fest*—a fonda[196] with only female musicians on stage—are opening up unprecedented spaces for women and a female discourse in the Chilean folk scene, which

[196] See glossary.

will for sure contribute towards leaving a mark on the more general organisation of gender roles in the Chilean society.

*'Brindaré por la cantora*
*Sea urbana o campesina*
*Que desde el corazón trina*
*Y hace miel de lo que llora*
*Al igual que las de otrora*
*La batalla es invisible*
*Pero no hay nada imposible*
*Si tenemos el aguante*
*Y salimos adelante*
*Porque somos invencibles'*

*(I will toast to the cantora,*
*whether urban or peasant,*
*who from the heart sings*
*and makes honey from her tears.*
*Like those of the past,*
*the battle is invisible,*
*but there is nothing impossible*
*if we have the strength,*
*and we continue forward*
*because we are invincible.)*

Daniela Sepúlveda (Charawilla)

# CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

*Table 7.1. Cueca Sola (Victoria Díaz)*

| **Spanish Lyrics (Original)** | **English Translation** |
|---|---|
| En un tiempo fui dichosa<br>apacible, eran mis días<br>mas llegó la desventura<br>perdí lo que más quería.<br><br>Me pregunto constante<br>donde te tienen<br>y nadie me responde<br>y tu no vienes.<br><br>Y tu no vienes, mi alma<br>larga es la ausencia<br>y por toda la tierra<br>pido conciencia.<br><br>Sin ti prenda querida<br>triste es la vida. | There were times when I was joyful<br>peaceful were my days<br>but misfortune arrived<br>I lost what I loved the most.<br><br>I ask myself constantly<br>where do they hold you<br>and nobody answers me<br>and you don't come.<br><br>And you don't come, my soul<br>long is your absence<br>and across the whole land<br>I demand consciousness.<br><br>Without you, loving piece of my heart<br>life is sad. |
| (Navarrete Araya and Donoso Fritz 2010, 113) | |

This cueca corresponds to the *cueca sola*, ('lonely cueca'), written by Victoria Díaz who belonged to the *Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos* ('Disappeared Convict Familiars Aggrupation'). This group was born during dictatorship years when 25 women who shared this experience of loss got together to form a folkloric group in order to voice their accusations. They first performed in the Caupolican Theatre in Santiago in 1978 (Rojas Sotoconil 2009, 59). The cueca sola shares the traditional cueca musical and poetic form, but in the choreography, the couple is replaced by a widowed woman who dances this cueca by herself, usually dressed in black, and wearing the photo of her disappeared partner.

The cueca sola constitutes a good example of one of the ways in which *popular* resistance has become materialised in the practice of cueca throughout its history. Having emerged in the late 1970s, this clandestine variant of the cueca took place at times when the *fiesta popular* was suspended by the military regime, who around the same years was declaring the cueca huasa as the national dance by legal decree. Nonetheless, things still needed to be said, and the cueca, as always, found a way to be present. Democracy was restored in 1990 and even when many were still suspicious of the cueca's political affiliation, a younger generation who sought to create new symbols to express their own (non-political) identities found in urban-popular cueca the most suitable space for reactivating the greatly missed Chilean fiesta. And thus the urban-popular cueca revival began.

This thesis has presented an examination of said revival process through the concept of *popular* resistance, analysing how such resistance has taken place in different battlefields of hegemonic negotiations, namely, those related to national identity, social class and gender. My attempt has been to undertake this analysis bearing in mind and acknowledging the (frequently dismissed) cultural specificity of the term *popular* in the context of a Latin American musical genre. The process of de-folklorisation of this cueca has been analogous to the (perhaps unconscious) efforts of de-colonisation and de-nationalisation of young local subjects, who have found in *lo popular* (and in *popular* music) a viable alternative for the expression of their own interests (chapter 3). As a result, I have presented the practice of urban-popular cueca as a performative exercise of *popular* resistance through the appropriation and celebration of mainly two related archetypes: the *roto* (chapter 5) and the *cantora* (chapter 6). I also offered two complementary approaches to the analysis of the music: the stylistic history of the genre (chapter 4) and a reflexive review of my personal music-learning process (chapter 2). These two methodological approaches have been vital for me to convey the musical aspects of the cueca and to reflect on the social issues I am discussing. As stated above, *popular* resistance has proven to be ubiquitous to this revival process.

Chapter 2 entailed perhaps one of the most important discoveries of my whole research process. With this chapter, I aimed to outline my own learning experience throughout these years of PhD research. This learning experience has involved the learning of the music, which I undertook through several lessons and workshops wherein I established different apprenticeship relations and also, more generally, relations of friendship. Since the beginning, I intended such lessons to be at the core of the ethnographic methods implemented in my research, without necessarily knowing where they would take me. Beyond the music, I have acquired learnings that have more to do with the totality of the experience of being a cueca practitioner, which comprises several extra-musical aspects. As such, this learning experience has deeply challenged some of my own inherited assumptions on issues related to politics, social relations and gender. Reflexivity has been most relevant here for articulating a narrative able to convey this musical/social learning process, which I have come to understand as a process of *becoming*, that is, a path with no fixed goal or desired conclusion but rather one that establishes an open horizon for the growth of my own musicianship, composed by the addition of multiple experiences.

In chapter 3, I explained the historical developments that led to the revival period since 1990, discussing the different variants of cueca that result from both stylistic categories (*música folklórica* and *música popular*), and social archetypes (*huaso* and *roto*). This entailed some terminological clarifications by which I analysed the concepts of popular music and folk music both in their English and Spanish usages, crucially leading to the discussion of *el pueblo* and *lo popular* as central concepts in this thesis. These clarifications enabled me to argue that, during the past three decades, the cueca has undergone a process of *de-folklorisation*, through which it has moved away from notions of folklore as understood in this thesis, and got closer to the notion of *música popular*. Now, *música popular* is understood here as musics that are (1) deeply associated with *el pueblo*, including lower-medium social groups, whose cultural expressions and practices—and very importantly, language—are a source of identity for many cuequeros; (2) musics that are also still very related to tradition, Chilean culture and local constructions of *Chileanness*; and (3) musics that are now widely open to innovate and include other styles and genres into the realm of cueca. What the recent changes in the urban-popular cueca scene have ultimately shown us is that nationalist symbols no longer represent the identities and interests of a younger, post-dictatorship generation, who today has more freedom to create their own symbols and to safeguard their own cultural referents.

Chapter 4 further illustrated this social history of the cueca, by presenting a detailed comparative musical analysis of several versions of eight particular cuecas, whose recordings range between 1906 and 2017. The analyses have mostly focused on the singing styles, also considering instrumental, rhythmic and harmonic features as additional elements to reflect the performative choices of cueca practitioners, bands and producers. I have argued that such performative choices can express social and cultural identifications and priorities at different historical periods throughout the twentieth century. In this sense, the stylistic history of the cueca has inevitably been built along with the social history of the genre and has thus proved to be an eloquent exhibition of the different social archetypes that I have discussed throughout these chapters. Furthermore, it has allowed me to illustrate the multiple paths followed by *the popular* throughout the twentieth century.

In chapter 5, I discussed the concept of music revival, understood as that which takes place when a determined group strives to restore a musical practice that is thought to be at risk of disappearing. The movement is driven, among other things, by a search

for authenticity and a sort of nostalgia given by the practice's belonging to an imagined 'immemorial home.' Such imagination is also understood as a process 'cultural editing,' whereby revivalist narratives provide the historical contents to the movement. In the case of urban-popular cueca, however, rather than at risk of disappearing, the practice remained hidden from the views of mainstream audiences. And rather than a search for authenticity, given by the mythical status of folk practitioners, the revivalist project, in this case, has been mostly moved by what core revivalists thought of as new and modern ways to interpret the cueca. Understanding the practice of canto a la rueda as separate from the cueca was an important purpose of this chapter. Canto a la rueda was presented as both a social rite and a performative style, giving substance to the urban-popular cueca that happens on stage. Quite importantly, canto a la rueda works as an articulator of *popular* identity, providing the revival youth a specific way to perform such an identity. There are two ways in which such a *popular* identity has unfolded through the practices of cueca and canto a la rueda during the revival years: through an exaltation of the practice's status of oral tradition, by which a process of re-institutionalisation of the cueca has been sought, and through the development of a space of resistance where young generations have found a place to exercise their subversive *popular* identities through the *fiesta popular*.

Chapter 6 is important for understanding how the figure of the contemporary urban cantora emerged from a mixture of historical and social contingencies. Firstly, I sought to understand the experience of female musicians within the male-dominated urban-popular cueca scene, particularly examining the role played by the figure of the traditional cantora in their aesthetic and social discourses. More generally, I set the analysis in the context of an overview of Chilean gender discourses as they have been historically informed by global feminist struggles and the regional experience of colonisation. Furthermore, I situated this analysis within the last three decades, which have entailed both a post-authoritarian period as well as the development of a more robust and defined local feminist movement, especially during the past ten years. In this context, I have found that contemporary urban cantoras have, one way or another, related to the traditional cantora archetype as a performative device through which they have been able to exercise resistance, which can be observed in the social and aesthetic discourses that comprise their various artistic proposals.

Having come across reflexive research methods rather at the final stages of my PhD, reflexivity has opened up more questions than answers, which enables this research

project to offer many potential paths for continuation. While I have thoroughly explored the cueca genre, and its latest developments in the urban-popular scenes of Santiago (mostly) and Valparaíso, the issues I have found to be the most relevant—*popular* resistance in reference to the constraints of national identity, social class and gender—have been mainly discussed from an external perspective. After exhaustively reviewing my own musical learning process I realised that although I personally experienced struggles in relation to such issues, I only became aware of those struggles and their theoretical potential retrospectively, during the writing of my last chapter. This means that a more in-depth exploration of my own embodied political/territorial, social and gendered realities can be highly instrumental for further analysis of the core concepts of this thesis, such as 'resistance' and the 'fiesta popular' in the specific context of Latin America.

While I have been self-conscious about my inherited social class privileges—the famous '*where-I-come-from*'—especially in the context of fieldwork, I think my level of engagement on the topic of social class through this thesis constitutes a mere starting point for an inquiry that highly motivates me for future research projects, and for which the study of the cueca and Latin American *popular* music practices in general promises to be fruitful. On another level, my process of becoming a researcher has also posed new questions in relation to a still widely colonised academic world, where subtleties of language turn out to be of extreme importance both in order to reflect the cultural specificities of a diverse academic community, and to be able to engage in more culturally inclusive academic dialogues. In this sense, while I have also been quite self-conscious of my foreigner status—even when it has been shared with many of my classmates and friends—I had not problematized it in terms of the remnants of global colonial relations and my own historical position within such relations. Finally, an introspective glance at my gendered condition both as a researcher in the UK and as a cueca apprentice in Chile is perhaps the task that I have left the most unfinished. More appropriately, undertaking autoethnographic research on my experience of becoming a cueca practitioner, and particularly a cantora, stands as a tremendous opportunity for future research in terms of further development of my discussion on gender relations in Chile as displayed in the worlds of music, tradition and *lo popular*. I have not directly engaged in reflexive gender analysis, in part because I have been much more aware of my class condition in Chile and my foreign condition in the UK. As Rubí Carreño (2007) sharply noted, Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship replicated the logic of colonisation by which gender (also Catholic

and right-wing) values were installed in the Chilean society. Twenty-eight years of post-authoritarianism in Chile have meant that as a society, we are only recently awakening to move beyond such inherited values towards more reflective identity articulations. In my case, autoethnography has provoked my own awakening, offering me ample horizons of research to continue the discussion over these topics. As noted repeatedly throughout these lines, resistance is ubiquitously present, and it has always been my personal experience of it—from my own national, class and gender positions—what has made me locate it at the centre of scrutiny.

I finish with a quote of an interview I held months before starting my PhD, in 2014, where I spoke to two friends, Javier Peña (Quiltro) and Caro López, about the roto. Until today, I have never stopped going back to that conversation, and the questions it posed in my head, which I believe have guided my whole research process.

> Javier: I was working at the Irish bar [in Santiago], and a *gringo*[197] [or foreigner] tells me: 'I saw some *rotos* fighting in the street.' I told him 'hey, but that's a really cool thing because the roto is a super important person. What do you understand by roto?' And he stood there looking at me: 'no, roto, people from the street.' I told him: 'roto is the coolest guy in Chile,' and he didn't understand what I was saying. I [continued]: 'roto is an intelligent person, a smart person who can figure you out in seconds and you won't even notice.' And this guy didn't understand me. I told him: 'I am roto all the way bro,' and this guy didn't understand, and he kept telling me 'very funny this guy,' as he patted my shoulder with disdain. I told him: 'remember that I am roto bro,' he just kept laughing, he didn't understand a thing I said.
>
> [After a short discussion, Javier concluded:]
>
> I think it's about the spark in the Chilean people (…)
>
> Caro: I started noticing it because one is used to the jokes, the fooling around (…) you are used to it. You realise it when you meet people from other places, who don't have this and even when one is like that, you tell them jokes and they don't get you, they don't have a clue (…). It's like we are all like that, or not all, from middle class downwards (…). Urban cueca has quite a lot of this, which the rural one doesn't have, that spark… (Javier and Carola, personal communication, 18th December 2014)

After almost three hours of exchanging conversation, tea and music in a hot summer afternoon at Caro's house in Maipú, Santiago, I remained kind of in a state of shock as I went back home. 'I don't have *that* particular kind of spark,' I thought. 'Is it because I am not Chilean enough? Does being Chilean necessarily mean belonging to *lo popular*? Or is it just my [non-class-related] personality?' were some of the questions I asked myself after that conversation, and which I still keep asking myself. I have finally come to understand the *fiesta popular* as a space of *popular* resistance precisely because it is a space that is not entirely intelligible for most of the people belonging to dominant

[197] In Chile the word *gringo* is most commonly applied when referring to people who come from the United States, but it is also more generally applied to any foreigner who comes from Europe or Anglophone North America.

social groups. It is a *fiesta* that has its own codes, which can, however, be learned, and the practice of urban-popular cueca offers an incredibly appealing path to undertake this learning process.

*Figure 7.1. Urban-popular Cueca*

*Source: Fieldwork photos and documents, 2016*

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Unknown. *El Canto Nuevo Vol. 2.* Isabel Aldunate. Alerce ALP-236, 1980, LP. http://perrerac.org/obras-colectivas/obra-colectiva-el-canto-nuevo-vol-2-1980/4415/

Unknown. *El Canto de Todos.* Inti Illimani ® feat. Marta Gómez. Producciones Artísticas Ñandú SPA, 2017, CD. http://perrerac.org/chile/inti-illimani-el-canto-de-todos-2017/11203/

### Example N° 8: La Enredadera

Orellana, Petronila. *A bailar cueca!!* Dúo Bascuñán-Del Campo. Odeón LDC-35124, 1964, LP. http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/9

Orellana, Petronila. *Sáquense los guantes y arriba las palmas.* Las Consentidas. Alba ALD-128, 1978, LP. http://cancionerodecuecas.fonotecanacional.cl/#!/disco/67

Orellana, Petronila. *El Parcito y sus cuecas con moño.* El Parcito. Alerce CDA-0538, 2010, CD.

Orellana, Petronila. *Chilenitas.* Las Primas. Sello Azul, 2013, CD.

## INTERVIEWS

**List of interviews conducted exclusively for this PhD (2016-2018):**

1. Rodrigo Torres (ethnomusicologist). Santiago: 30th of March 2016
2. Claudia Mena. Santiago: 1st of April 2016
3. Hernán Rojas Lazo (Los Nogalinos). Santiago: 1st of April 2016
4. María Esther Zamora. Santiago: 7th of April 2016
5. Jaco and Nicolás (Los Tricolores). Santiago: 9th of April 2016
6. Luis Fernando Castro González (Los Chinganeros). Santiago: 10th of April 2016
7. Dángelo Guerra. Santiago: 12th of April 2016
8. Aladín Reyes and Miguel Molina (Dúo Reyes-Molina). Santiago: 21st of April 2016
9. Tatiana Passy Lucero González. Valparaíso: 23rd of April 2016
10. Daniela Sepúlveda. Valparaíso: 24rd of April 2016
11. Nicolás Poblete R.; Pablo Guzmán; Luis Castillo; Dángelo Guerra (Los Piolas del Lote). Santiago: 4th of May 2016 [Group interview]
12. Diego Barrera. Santiago: 6th of May 2016
13. Cristián Sánchez (Los Santiaguinos). Santiago: 6th of January 2017 [Group interview]
14. Daniela Meza L. (Las Pecadoras). Santiago: 12th of January 2017
15. Josi Villanueva (Flor de Juanas). Santiago: 12th of January 2017
16. Pablo Naranjo (La Cuadrilla). Santiago: 12th of January 2017 [Group interview]
17. Diego Cabello (De Caramba). Santiago: 16th of January 2017 [Group interview]
18. Nicolás Lascar Cortés (Voy y Vuelvo). Santiago: 17th of January 2017
19. Paulina Martinez (Calila Lila). Santiago: 19th of January 2017 [Group interview]
20. Daniel Mateo José Leiva Garcés. Santiago: 19th of January 2017
21. Manuel Jimenez (Medio Chile Clavao). Santiago: 21st of January 2017 [Group interview]
22. Fernando Squicciarini (San Cayetano). Santiago: 21st of January 2017
23. Daniela Sepúlveda and Tatiana Passy Lucero González (Ellas). Valparaíso: 22nd of January 2017
24. Natalia Ahumada. Valparaíso: 22nd of January 2017
25. Fernando Barrios (La Gallera). Santiago: 23rd of January 2017
26. Leslie Becerra Reyes (Las Primas) and Rodrigo Miranda V. (Los Trukeros). Santiago: 23rd of January 2017

27. Julio Alegría G.H. (Aparcoa). Santiago: 24th of January 2017
28. Mario Rojas (musician and producer). Santiago: 24th of January 2017
29. Rodrigo Torres (Ethnomusicologist). Santiago: 25th of January 2017
30. Felipe Solís Poblete (sociologist and director of the site cancionerodecuecas.cl). Santiago: 25th of January 2017
31. Caro López. Santiago: 16th of August 2017
32. Luis Rivas Poblete (Maihuén). Santiago: 17th of August 2017
33. Daniel Muñoz (Los Marujos). Santiago: 21st of August 2017
34. Victor Hugo Campusano (Altamar). Santiago: 21st of August 2017
35. José Batlle (Los Compadritos). Santiago: 21st of August 2017 [Group interview]
36. Daniela Sepúlveda (Charawilla). Santiago: 22nd of August 2017
37. Isabel Fuentes Pino (Las Morenitas). San Vicente de Tagua Tagua: 23rd of August 2017 [Group interview]
38. Romina Nuñez; Consuelo Valenzuela Baeza; Lilian Riffo Correa; Gabriela Contreras Araya (Las Torcazas). Santiago: 24th of August 2017 [Group interview]
39. Miloska Valero. London (via Skype): 25th of September 2017
40. Caro López. London (via Skype): 15th of November 2017
41. Kathy Soto (Calila Lila). London (via Skype): 18th of January 2018
42. Andrea Andreu. London (via Skype): 12th of February 2018
43. Claudia Mena. London (via Skype): 28th of July 2018

**List of interviews conducted previously as part of other projects (2012-2014):**

1. Las Morenitas, Diego Barrera, and friends. San Vicente de Tagua Tagua: 13th of December 2012. [Group interview]
2. Santiago Figueroa. Rancagua: 28th of February 2013.
3. Las Morenitas, Diego Barrera, and friends. San Vicente de Tagua Tagua: 26th of November 2014. [Group interview]
4. Margot Loyola and Osvaldo Cádiz. Santiago: 9th of December 2014.
5. Luis Rivas Poblete (Maihuén). Santiago: 17th of December 2014.
6. Caro López and Javier Peña. Santiago: 18th of December 2014.
7. Margot Loyola and Osvaldo Cádiz. Santiago: 19th of December 2014.
8. Diego Barrera. Santiago: 22nd of December 2014.

## MUSIC LESSONS

1. Diego Barrera, harp private lessons. Santiago: 11th of March 2016 – 3rd of May 2016.
2. Luis Castro, canto a la rueda workshop. Santiago: 7th of March 2016 – 24th of April 2016.
3. Alejandro Reyes, Chilean peasant guitar strumming (unofficial) lessons. London: October 2016 – May 2017.
4. Fernando Barrios, canto a la rueda workshop. Santiago: 3rd of January 2017 – 28th of January 2017.
5. Fernando Barrios, pandero workshop. Santiago: 3rd of January 2017 – 26th of January 2017.
6. Luis Castro, canto a la rueda workshop. Santiago: 26th of December 2016 – 28th of January 2017.

## PARTICIPANT OBSERVATIONS (LIVE MUSIC PRESENTATIONS AND EVENTS)

1. *Los de Logroño* at 'La Casa en el Aire' pub, Santiago: 9th of March 2016.
2. *Los de Mapocho* at 'La Remolienda' pub, Santiago: 10th of March 2016.
3. *Los Nogalinos* at 'El Huaso Enrique' pub, Santiago: 11th of March 2016.
4. *Aladín y sus Reyes* at 'El Huaso Enrique' pub, Santiago: 17th of March 2016.
5. *La Gallera* at 'Bar Victoria' pub, Santiago: 24th of March 2016.
6. *Los Nogalinos* and *Las Pecadoras* at 'Bar Victoria' pub, Santiago: 25th of March 2016.
7. *Voy y Vuelvo* at 'Ópera Catedral' pub, Santiago: 30th of March 2016.
8. *Los Tricolores* at 'El Huaso Enrique' pub, Santiago: 8th of April 2017.
9. *Lucy Briceño* and band at 'La Isla de la Fantasía' pub, Valparaíso: 25th of April 2016.
10. Traditional monthly Sunday lunch at 'Casa de la Cueca,' Santiago: 8th of January 2017.
11. *Las Pecadoras* and *Flor de Juanas* at 'Las Damajuanas' pub and cultural centre, Santiago: 12th of January 2017.
12. *La Cuadrilla* at 'El Huaso Enrique' pub, Santiago: 12th of January 2017.
13. 'Fiesta del Roto Chileno' at Barrio Yungay, Santiago: 21st of January 2017.
14. National Encounter of Canto a la Rueda, Santiago: 28th of January 2017.
15. Payadores(as) at 'Chancho 6' pub, Santiago: 22nd of August 2017.

# APPENDIX: GLOSSARY

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| **Bravo** | The word *bravo* is an adjective describing attitudes of roughness and wildness—for instance, it is very commonly used to warn about dangerous dogs that will bite (*perro bravo*). It is also used in reference to hostile marginal neighbourhoods. That is why urban-popular cueca (see below) is sometimes called *cueca brava*. |
| **Boîte** | Borrowed from the French language, the word *boîte* refers to sorts of modern ballrooms that operated in urban locations in Chile (and Iberian-American cities) between the 1940s and 1960s. It would be an ancestor to today's *boliches* or dance clubs. |
| **Cacharaina** | *Cacharaina* is a cow or donkey mandible commonly used as a percussion instrument in folkloric music. |
| **Canto a la rueda** | *Canto a la rueda* refers to the traditional way of singing the cueca in particular neighbourhoods in Santiago (*Estación Central*, *La Vega* and *Matadero*) and Valparaíso (*Barrio Puerto*) (see figures 0.1 and 0.2), especially between the 1930s and the 1970s. This specific way of singing the Chilean cueca entails an improvisatory singing challenge where participants, standing next to one another and forming a circle (the word *rueda* literally means 'wheel' in Spanish), must continuously sing cueca songs without repeating lyrics and subjected to a given melody and its particular metrics. This tradition is thought to have been inherited from the Arab-Andalusian culture that was brought to the continent by the Spanish colonisers. This tradition is analysed in detail in chapter 5. |
| **Canto a lo Divino** | Canto a lo Divino (singing to The Divine) is a form of *Canto a lo poeta* or *paya* (see below)—historically derived from the *villancicos* (songs dedicated to the new-born Christ)—where the verses are dedicated to religious topics. This tradition is analysed in detail in chapter 1. |
| **Canto a lo humano** | Canto a lo humano (singing to the humane) is a form of *Canto a lo poeta* or *paya* (see below) where the verses are dedicated to issues concerning the human condition (love, politics, social injustice, etc.). This tradition is analysed in detail in chapter 1. |
| **Canto a lo poeta** | Canto a lo poeta (or *paya*) is the name given in Chile to the poetic-musical form that was inherited from the Spanish Jesuits who came along with the colonisers to evangelise the Amerindian population in the occupied continent. It consists of sung verses usually structured in *décimas* (see below). It is traditionally practised by popular poets, also called *payadores*, who can be understood as related to figures like the troubadour or the story-teller. There are many ways in which the canto a lo poeta is practised (e.g. Canto a lo Divino and Canto a lo Humano—see above), but today it is most commonly associated with the improvisatory challenges between two or more popular poets. It can be in front of an audience or in intimate gatherings. This tradition is analysed in detail in chapter 1. |
| **Canto Nuevo** | Canto Nuevo is a musical-political movement that developed in Chile during the mid 1970s, as an expression of cultural resistance in |

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| | response to the repression of Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990). The movement was initiated by a young generation of musicians that remained in Chile during the dictatorship, who sought to continue developing the *Nueva Canción* (see below) social discourse, which was at that time mostly forbidden and repressed. During the first years of dictatorship, everything that was related to the *nueva canción*—even instruments like the *charango* (small five-double-string Andean guitar)—where banned, as they were associated with a subversive political position. However, the development of classically-trained groups of 'Andean Baroque,' led to a progressive acceptance of re-contextualised Andean music, which gradually re-opened spaces for disguised-engaged song in churches, universities and *peñas* (see below). Some examples of groups and musicians are: *Santiago del Nuevo Extremo, Sol y Lluvia*, Dióscoro Rojas, Isabel Aldunate, Richard Rojas, Osvaldo Torres, etc. |
| **Cantora** | The word *cantora* refers to a female singer and is usually applied in the context of traditional music in Chile and many parts of Latin America. The cantora is a woman, predominantly peasant, who has cultivated the craft of local musical practices through oral tradition, fulfilling an important social role at the core of her local community's socialising and entertaining spaces. The figure of the cantora is thoroughly discussed in chapter 6. |
| **Casas de canto** | *Casas de canto* were taverns or brothels located in working-class neighbourhoods, most generally hosted by women, which functioned roughly from the late nineteenth century through to the first half of the twentieth century. It was characterised by featuring live musicians performing cuecas and other sorts of urban-popular music until dawn. |
| **Charango** | The *charango* is a small five-double-string Andean guitar, present in the Andean region of the Southern Cone (Perú, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Ecuador). Its sounding board was traditionally built with the shell of a *quirquincho* (a kind of Andean armadillo). Currently, it is fabricated with wood. |
| **Chicha** | The word *chicha* refers to a typical Chilean grape liquor |
| **Chilena** | *Chilena* is another way to refer to the Chilean cueca. The term is especially used within the urban-popular cueca scene. |
| **China** | The word *china* has been most commonly used in Chile to refer to the female correlate of both the (urban) *roto* (see below) and the (rural) *huaso* (see below). The term is thought to come from the *quechua* language, with several meanings, such as '1) Girl, young woman, lower class woman, commoner (usually derogatory); 2) Maid, servant (pejorative); 3) Indian woman; 4) Beloved, submissive, public woman' (Garrido 1976, 68). All of these meanings represent a woman that is either socially or sexually in a subordinate position. The term is thought to have been used initially when referring to indigenous women who served the Spanish soldiers, and that is the inaugural image from which current meanings and associations have been derived, being applied today especially to women of marginal origins. |
| **Chinchinero** | *Chinchinero* is a Chilean term that refers to a particular kind of street performer who plays a sort of bass-drum with a high-hat attached toit. |

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| | The drum has a mechanism whereby it is held on the performer's back with ropes that are also attached to her/his—most commonly his—feet. Thus, they play the drum as they take dancing steps that coordinate the rhythm that sounds out of their performance. |
| **Chingana / Chinganero** | The word *chingana* comes from the quechua language and means 'hideout.' It was adapted by the Chilean language and came to mean 'ordinary tavern,' according to Rodolfo Lenz (Garrido 1979, 171). The term represents taverns or brothels located in *popular* neighbourhoods during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For a history of the chinganas in Chile see Donoso 2007.<br>The word *chinganero(a)* is an adjective relative to the chingana. It can be used, for instance, to refer to a musical style (chinganero piano-playing style). Today one of the most emblematic groups of urban-popular cueca is called *Los Chinganeros*. Also, a very well-known cantora and payadora is called *La Chinganera*. |
| **Choro** | *Choro* is a term that refers to tough, defying attitudes, usually associated with delinquency and hostile environments. |
| **Coa** | *Coa* is the name of the slang from the streets or jail in Chile. |
| **Copla** | *Copla* is a Spanish poetic form usually consisting of four octosyllabic verses, where the second verse rhymes with the fourth one. *Coplas* constitute the initial section of the cueca, and can also be commonly found as the introductory lines of the *décima*. |
| **Cuarteta** | *Cuarteta* is a Spanish poetic form usually consisting of four octosyllabic verses, where the first verse rhymes with the third one and the second verse rhymes with the fourth one (ABAB). |
| **Cuatro venezolano** | *Cuatro* is a a medium-sized four-string guitar which features a slightly deeper sounding board. |
| **Cueca huasa** | The *cueca huasa* corresponds to the rural variant of the cueca. It represents romantic peasant imaginaries, and is based on the ideal archetype of the *huaso* (see below), which constitutes a model and a symbol of the Chilean natonal identity. In the context of this thesis, the cueca huasa is more broadly refered to as creole cueca. It is also classified as *música típica*, *música folklórica*, and *música tradicional* (see chapter 3). Historical overviews of the cueca huasa are discussed in chapters 3 and 4. |
| **Cueca brava / Cueca chilenera / Cueca chora** | These three terms denote urban-popular variants of the cueca.<br>The name *cueca brava* was given by EMI-Odeon, the that recorded *Los Chileneros*, refers to the hostility of the marginal neighbourhoods that cueca came from, and some years later the whole urban-popular cueca (see below) style came to be represented by this name.<br>The name *cueca chilenera* refers to the style of the cueca sung by *Los Chileneros*.<br>The name *cueca chora* refers to urban-popular cueca in the port city of Valparaíso, and was the label given to Roberto Parra's cuecas, as they spoke about the lives of those belonging to *lo popular* (*choros*—see above—or *rotos*—see below) in Valparaíso. |
| **Décima / Décima espinela** | The term *Décima* or *Décima Espinela* takes its name from the Spanish writer and musician Vicente Espinel (1550-1642), who created this |

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| | metric form, which consists of ten octosyllabic verses whose rhyming scheme is ABBAACCDDC. |
| **Encomendero** | *Encomendero* is the term to define the men who were endowed by the Spanish monarchy with an *Encomienda*—a group of indigenous people—during the Spanish colonisation in the Americas. |
| **Fiesta popular** | *Fiesta popular* is a phrase that refers to the idea of collective enjoyment (*fiesta)*, linked to a working-class experience or identification (*popular*—see below). Chapter 1 presents a thorough conceptual framework of the term. |
| **Folklore** | The term *folklore* generally refers to cultural expressions shared by a community, often associated with rural landscapes and national identities. In the context of this thesis, I understand folklore (and all its formulations, including that of *música folklórica*) as a device of political control used by the state and hegemonic circles. This idea is developed in detail in chapter 3. |
| **Fonda** | *Fonda* is the name of the annual independence-day celebrations that take place every 18th of September. Fondas have existed at least for as long as the cueca has existed, as a space of *popular* entertainment. Currently they consist of wide outdoor spaces that are roofed with tree branches and leaves creating a sort of temporal warehouse for the independence-day celebrations to take place in. The space is typically organised with food/drink stalls and traditional games stalls in the perimeter, with one large stage at one of its ends, a large space for dancing next to it, and the rest of the space in the middle covered with tables for sharing the food, drinks, friendship and laughter. Typically, the fondas can host between 300 and 1000 participants each night, and they last for around five to seven days during the week of the 18th of September (the day when independence is commemorated in Chile). |
| **Gringo** | In Chile the Word *gringo* is most commonly applied when referring to people who come from the United States, but it is also more generally applied to any foreigner who comes from Europe or Anglophone North America. |
| **Guachaca** | *Guachaca* is a Chilean *popular* idiom that would relate to the world of the *roto*, meaning something in-between that which is unrefined, cheesy, poor, and with a touch of humour at the same time. It is not a derogatory term, but rather used with pride by a popular sector of Chilean society to identify themselves and their customs. The style of jazz played by Roberto Parra was labelled with this word by his brother Nicanor, and later popularised as a genuine Chilean jazz-style. |
| **Guitarra Traspuesta** | The common usage in rural areas in Chile and Latin America whereby they tune the guitar differently, generally matching any given major chord, to allow the cantoras to improvise guitar arrangements more easily. There are about 70 different guitar tunings found in different corners of rural Chile so far, and this tradition dates from medieval musical systems inherited from the Spaniards in early colonial periods. |
| **Guitarrón** | The *guitarrón chileno* is a 25-string guitar used exclusively in the context of poetic improvisatory challenges called *payas* (see below) or *canto a lo poeta* (see above). |

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| **Hacienda** | The Spanish word *hacienda* refers to an administrative territorial unit, usually of large proportions, owned by Spaniards or their creole inheritors during the colonial period across Latin America. |
| **Huaso / Huasa** | Huaso is a term commonly used in Chile to refer to male and female (huasa) peasants. The term also comes from the romantisation of this humble peasant character, whereby the huaso has been transformed into an idealised archetype often employed to symbolise the Chilean national identity. |
| **Lira Popular** | The *lira popular* was a type of nineteenth-century newsprint consisting of broadsheets that featured *décimas* (see above) and other poetic forms through which popular poets would narrate the events and social contingencies of their time. |
| **Mapuche** | *Mapuche* is the name of an indigenous group that is original from the south of Chile and Argentina. They have been also commonly called *Araucanos* in the literature, which is the name Spaniards used to refer to them, as they called their territory 'Arauco.' |
| **Música folklórica** | *Música folklórica* is the label given to local, traditional musics in Hispanic American countries, also in association with folklore (see above). While the term folklore is most commonly—both in English and Spanish—associated with traditional cultural expressions shared within local communities through oral tradition, throughout this thesis I also often use it in reference to the transformation of these local traditional practices and expressions in national symbols (i.e. folklorisation). In such a context, *música folklórica* would be understood as the artistic projection of these local cultural expressions to diverse ends: pedagogical, institutional, political, entertainment-related, etc., and folklorisation would be the particular process through which the meanings of folklore change into national symbols (see discussion in chapter 3). |
| **Música popular** | Like popular music, *música popular* is a broad category encompassing a wide range of genres of contemporary Hispanic-American cultures. In the context of this thesis and in relation to the recent developments of *urban-popular cueca* (see below), I understand the term of *música popular* in relation to three concepts: (1) a manifest relation to *el pueblo* (see below) and *lo popular* (see below), in terms of a working-class belonging and/or identification; (2) a persistent association with *folklore* (see above) and national identity—which does not necessarily relate to nationalism; and (3) the presence of fusion or quotation of other genres from the urban musical environment. This concept is thoroughly discussed in chapter 3. |
| **Neofolklore** | *Neofolklore* was a musical movement which started in Chile in the 1960s as an attempt to move away from the priorities of the industrialised creole groups, in order to attain creative freedom that would allow for the recuperation and renovation of lost Chilean folk genres. The result was an abundant repertoire of new compositions as well as original re-arrangements of old songs, all with the touch of the modernised creative spirit of a younger generation of musicians. Some of these musicians had a strong social discourse, and, notwithstanding their importance at neofolklore's rising stages, they found their most |

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| | adequate musical and social movement in the *nueva canción* (see below), which would emerge shortly after. Examples are Rolando Alarcón, Víctor Jara, Patricio Manns, Violeta Parra, her son Ángel and her daughter Isabel. |
| **Nueva canción / Nueva canción chilena** | *Nueva Canción* was a Latin American musical-political movement that was born in Chile during the 1960s (as the *Nueva Canción Chilena*), and which developed across many Latin American countries accompanying left-wing socialist projects and revolutions, which were afterwards met with strong State and military repressions during the 1970s wave of right-wing dictatorships across the region. Exemplary exponents are the groups *Inti Illimani*, *Quilapayún*, *Illapu*, and the artists Violeta Parra, Patricio Manns and Víctor Jara, among others. For more details on the movement's historical development see Fairley (1984). |
| **Pandero** | The *pandero* is a small hexagonal membranophone similar to a tambourine. It was present in Chilean music since the nineteenth century, although only during the 1940s was it incorporated in the cueca scene. |
| **Pachanga / Pachanguero** | *Pachanga* is a slang Latin American word that refers to dance parties, and at least in Chile it is applied to genres such as *cumbia*, *salsa*, etc. |
| **Paya / Payador / Payadora** | Canto a lo poeta (or *paya*) is the name given in Chile to the poetic-musical form that was inherited from the Spanish Jesuits who came along with the colonisers to evangelise the Amerindian population in the occupied continent. It consists of sung verses usually structured in *décimas* (see below). It is traditionally practised by popular poets, also called *payadores* (*payador* if male, *payadora* if female), who can be understood as related to figures like the troubadour or the story-teller. There are many ways in which the canto a lo poeta is practised (e.g. Canto a lo Divino and Canto a lo Humano—see above), but today it is most commonly associated with the improvisatory challenges between two or more popular poets. It can be in front of an audience or in intimate gatherings.<br>This tradition is analysed in detail in chapter 1. |
| **Peña / peña folklórica** | The word *peña* is thought to be derived from the *Mapudungún* (language of the Mapuche people—see above) *peñi*, which means 'brother.' It consists of a social gathering of musicians, poets and folklorists who perform in front of a small audience who are usually seated in tables and served traditional Chilean food in an intimate environment. All peñas were shut down during the military dictatorship (1973-1990). |
| **Pipeño** | *Pipeño* is a Chilean slang word for cheap, low-quality wine. |
| **(lo) Popular** | The term *popular* is etymologically related to the notions of *el pueblo* (see below), or the people. As such, it has a particular class association, which in this case corresponds to the working class. Following Rowe and Schelling (1991), I define *lo popular* as related both to the rural world—as a source of authenticity in the midst of the threats of contemporary culture—and to subaltern cultures that provide contents for potential alternative hegemonies. Thus, in the context of this thesis, |

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| | the Spanish term *popular* contains an implicit reference to the notion of resistance. The concept is further analysed in chapters 1 and 4. |
| **(el) Pueblo** | *El pueblo* is a term that presents an explicit class connotation, refering to the belonging to or identification with subaltern or working classes. The concept is further discussed in chapters 1 and 4. |
| **Redonda** | *Redonda* is a Spanish poetic form usually consisting of four octosyllabic verses, where the first verse rhymes with the fourth one and the second verse rhymes with the third one (ABBA). |
| **Remate** | The *remate*, also known as *cogollo*, *pareado*, or *dístico*, corresponds to the two ending verses of the cueca. |
| **Roto** | The term *roto* refers to the urban-popular subject in Chile. Depending on social position, it can be regarded as the lumpen of Chilean society, and also as a source of pride for the working classes. There has also been some kind of romantisation of this figure, associated with those humble and brave men who went to fight in the *Guerra del Pacífico* (War of The Pacific, or Saltpeter War, 1879-1883), and transformed into the social archetype of *el pueblo* (see above). The term is discussed in detail in chapter 5. |
| **Seguidilla / Siguiriya** | The *seguidilla* or *siguiriya* constitutes the middle eight verses of the cueca, between the *copla* and the *remate*. According to Dorothy Clarke, 'The typical *seguidilla* is a four-verse strophe of alternating seven- and five-syllable verses, the even verses having assonance. The *seguidilla* is often followed by an *estribillo* of three verses—five, seven, five syllables—having assonance, different from the first, in the short lines. Line length may vary, and consonance occasionally replaces assonance' (1944, 211). In the case of Chilean cueca, we speak of two *seguidillas*, while, strictly speaking, it actually consists of one *seguidilla* followed by one *estribillo*, the latter of which takes the last line of the *seguidilla* and repeats it so that it can be transformed into the second *seguidilla*. See chapter 1 for examples. |
| **Tamboreo / Tañido** | *Tamboreo* or *tañido* is a rhythmic thump on the guitar or the harp that is traditionally taken as part of the folkloric rhythmic section. This practice is traditionally—though not exclusively—associated with peasant *cantora* (see above) duets. |
| **Tonada** | *Tonada* is a Chilean folk song genre of flexible form. It shares rhythmic and timbral characteristics with the cueca, as well as styles and performing occasions, and thus both can be easily mistaken by an unacquainted auditor. The tonada, however, is usually more exclusively related to rural environments and it is not meant to be danced, while the cueca has geographically developed many stylistic variants (both urban and rural) which can be performed in diverse contexts. |
| **Tormento** | A *tormento* is a wooden rectangular idiophone which can be placed on the musician's lap, or it can have its own base, allowing it to be percussed horizontally. According to Isabel (Chabelita) Fuentes, the founder of *Las Morenitas*, the *tormento* appeared in the cueca alongside the *pandero* around 1940 (personal communication 16 March 2018). |

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| **Urban-popular cueca** | Urban-popular cueca is the term I use to describe the stylistic variant of the cueca genre that constitutes the main focus of this revival process. It corresponds to the cueca as practised in certain *popular* neighbourhoods in Santiago and Valparaíso (see figures 0.1 and 0.2) roughly between 1930 and 1973. It is also called *cueca brava*, *cueca chora* or *cueca chilenera*. |